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CURRENT COMMENT.

THE Brooklyn *Eagle* reports that Senator Knox, on his arrival in Paris, 11 September, said that our next war, a war of commercial competition with England, has already begun. He remarked that we have handed our rival ten billion dollars to insure an even start, and that all America now asks is fair play. It is reassuring to hear from some one in our public life a frank statement of our situation. Most people seem to imagine that the war is over; the fact is, however, as Senator Knox says, it has just begun. The war of blood and iron was a mere episode, which had only the effect, as this paper has long been pointing out, of shifting the world's centre of economic rivalry. It has put the United States in the place of Germany as England's chief economic competitor. The sooner we all become aware of this, the better; the more coolly and frankly we measure its implications and consequences, the better. There is precious little importance attaching to opinions about "the next war"; the important thing is that we are in it at this moment, up to our necks, and can not possibly get out until one side or the other succumbs to a good sound whaling—or the present system of privilege and exploitation is blown to atoms like the horse and cart in the Wall Street explosion.

WE do not see how anyone in his right mind can doubt this fact, and we urge merely that our fellow-citizens should recognize it as candidly as Senator Knox does. A conflict of imperialist nationalism may be justifiable, and again it may not. The one unjustifiable thing is that of going into any conflict with one's eyes shut. Senator Knox further remarked that "peoples don't fight peoples; Governments fight Governments." Precisely. It may be worth while for the people of this country to be dragged into the battle of imperialism with the people of England, and again it may not. For our part, we think it is not worth while. But we insist that this is not now a debatable question. What we insist upon is the arrant folly of humbugging oneself about the facts of our status. For years the people of England humbugged themselves royally with the idea that they could dance to the tune of economic imperialism without ever paying the piper, and it is highly important that the people of this country should not succumb to a similar notion. Since our feet have already begun to fly to the same attractive tune, well and good; but let us not pretend that we are having all this fun gratis and that there will be no bill.

SENATOR KNOX's statement is all the more interesting in that it comes from a man of his political persuasion. The Senator, like Chief Justice Taft, is the kind of old-style, hard-baked tory for whom this paper has immense respect, because the traditions and principles of torism mean something to him and he would sacrifice something to maintain them. The trouble with torism in America, as Mr. H. L. Mencken very ably pointed out in the *Baltimore Sun* the other day, is that it is not torism at all but mere moneyism. Its only traditions and principles are those of hogging all the money there is, and of keeping it after one has hogged it. One gets a bit surfeited with this sort of thing, and comes to regard its representatives, its methods, and all its elaborate apparatus of newspapers, universities, foundations, schools, publishing-houses and pulpits, with contempt. Per contrary, as the literary fellows say, one gains in admiration for the tory who has kept faith with what has always been the best thing, the saving thing, about genuine torism, i.e., its standard of *noblesse oblige*. Such tories are few in this country and far between, but, to the best of our knowledge, Mr. Knox is one of them. For one thing, we doubt that ever Mr. Knox put his experience as a public servant at the disposal of a private client; and with an ex-President, Woodrow Wilson, and an ex-Secretary of State, Bainbridge Colby, now representing private claims against the Government in the matter of the Shipping Board, this is an extremely pleasant thing to remember.

SPEAKING of American torism, we have waited three months in vain expectation that Mr. Hoover would start a libel-suit against one of our contemporaries for printing the story of his breaking up the Hungarian revolution with food. The story is most naïvely told by a man who purports to have been Mr. Hoover's official representative in Hungary. It is a story of connivance, bribery, embracery and double-dealing, and it gives Mr. Hoover full credit for being the principal agency in bringing about the downfall of the Hungarian Soviet Government through such means. Having said what we had to say about the torism of Mr. Knox and our sincere respect for it, we may perhaps bring forward this story in illustration of another and more common variety of torism for which we must be allowed to say we have no respect whatever.

CAST the bread of imperialism upon the waters, and there seems to be no end to its coming back! In 1904, four international speculators—Mr. A. J. Balfour, then the British Premier; his Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne; M. Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister; and his Ambassador to London, M. Paul Cambon—made a secret deal, whereby French interests should have an economic monopoly in Morocco, and British interests a free hand in Egypt. Out of this came the great war of 1914. At the same time the French and Spanish Governments negotiated a secret arrangement at the instigation of Lord Lansdowne, whereby Spain became possessed of some Moroccan territory known as the Riff country. This has always been a liability, notwithstanding the large sums of money spent by Spain in successive efforts to establish her position. Now the tribesmen of the Riff, as tenacious of independence as any people on earth, have broken out into rebellion; the Spanish people are reluctant about throwing any more good lives and good money after bad; and so the Spanish Government is drumming up recruits among the unemployed and destitute of all nations for

the despicable purpose of consolidating an outrageous theft of territory from a noble race which asks only to be let alone.

FRENCH interests are inextricably mixed up in this nefarious business; as they are, directly or indirectly, in about every imperialist enterprise on the Eastern Hemisphere. Marshal Lyautey, according to Paris dispatches, has plans for what is delicately called the "permanent pacification" of the Middle Atlas region, which lies south of and adjacent to the Spanish district where the present trouble is. If the hand of Spain weakens, there is apt to be danger ahead for General Lyautey's beneficent project; indeed, it is possible that any notable success of the Moors would set up a disturbance throughout the entire Mohammedan world. Hence, the French politicians and militarists see a pretty distinct prospect of having to go to the rescue. This situation will bear watching on all accounts; and not least on account of the domestic condition of Spain. The Spanish Government has put about \$100 million down the Moroccan rat-hole in the last year, and the Spanish people are becoming restless. Imperialism pays, unquestionably, in that it creates a few huge private fortunes; but otherwise it seems a most unprofitable policy.

By way of learning what patriotism and nationalism amount to, and what their real uses are, one may profitably notice the way that British manufacturers are exploiting the wool-industry of Poland. Wages in Poland are lower than in England, and hours are longer; hence English capital goes to Poland and operates there, playing off the low wages and long hours and unfavourable exchange against the British workmen at home. Thus, by the simple expedient of operating wherever land is cheapest and labour is cheapest, the employment of capital under present conditions tends everywhere to keep labour at the lowest level. Does anyone imagine, with the dollar where it is and American wages and hours where they are, that American labour is not going to feel the full force of this process for years to come? It strikes us that the prophets of good times just around the corner are engaged not only in a mischievous business, but a mean business, for they must know better, and they are deluding people who are pathetically wishful to believe them.

SOME of our friends inveigh against our perversity in not seeing in these matters a clear proof that capitalism ought to be abolished. Well, we are open to conviction, but up to the present, we have not been able clearly to understand what they mean by capitalism. We know what capital is; it is that portion of wealth which is used to facilitate the production of more wealth. If by the abolition of capitalism our friends mean—and we are, as we say, by no means sure what they mean—abolition of the private control of capital, we take leave to think that the remedy is worse than the disease. It is too much like cutting off one's head to cure a headache; the operation is sure to be a success, but the success is not advantageous. The public control of capital would mean an immeasurable enlargement of the powers and functions of the State; and if there is such a thing as certainty, one may be certain that the State has far too many powers and functions now.

OTHER friends twit us as free-traders, for our complaints about the exportation of capital, saying that we are inconsistent; which shows only that they have read us very inattentively. What we complain about is the enforced exportation of capital—enforced by landlordism. This is a horse of another colour. We are absolutely for the *laissez-faire*, *laissez-passer* of the Physiocrats; which, being interpreted, means "freedom of production, freedom of exchange." Capital inevitably tends to operate where land (i.e., natural resources) is cheap and labour is cheap; and with the natural free motion of capital in this or that direction, we find no fault. But it must be a *free* motion; and the present motion of American capital is not a free motion. It is determined by landlordism; by

the fact that the land of the United States is monopolized and bears a monopoly-price. If natural opportunity in America were free, the outflow of capital would, even under the present extraordinary circumstances, be greatly reduced; and no one thing, we are convinced, would regulate and equalize the distribution of capital like the liberation of natural opportunity. We have, for a year and a half, repeatedly made this suggestion to our friends, particularly those of the liberal persuasion, but they show a persistent, inscrutable and unaccountable unwillingness to say anything about it.

We spoke last week of the purchase by an American syndicate of an estate valued at \$200 million, belonging to the Archduke Frederick of Austria. There appears to be an element of humour in the transaction, inasmuch as the property is scattered around among six nations who are protesting against its transfer to the syndicate; and the syndicate has retained the services of M. René Viviani, ex-Premier of France to push its claim. Since he can be gotten to do it, we must say that he is pre-eminently the boy for the job. Getting M. Viviani to push a private claim against Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania is as good a stroke of business as getting Messrs. Wilson and Colby to push a private claim against the Shipping Board; and his influence, direct or indirect, would also presumably go quite a long way with Austria and Italy.

REPORTS say that this estate includes the great iron works of Teschen; the dairies that supply the city of Vienna with most of its milk and butter; a number of other industries; and about a million acres of agricultural land and timber-land. Altogether, it seems a bargain for \$200 million. We remind our readers that exchange against Austria is very heavy, Austrian wages are, therefore, practically nothing, as measured in what our tourists in Europe call "regular money," and Austrian hours and conditions of labour are much below the American standard. Well, here goes \$200 million worth of American capital to set up shop at the Archduke's old stand, and exploit these interesting little differences at the expense of American industry, just as we have noticed English capital going over to Poland and exploiting similar conditions at the expense of the wool-industry in their own, their native land.

"Do you think that Mr. Harding can put over his disarmament-programme?" said Mr. Ford to Mr. Edison the other day. (We quote from the esteemed *Christian Science Monitor*.) "I think it will depend upon money," said Mr. Edison to Mr. Ford. "If money can be found to keep on maintaining armies and navies, I think the conference will fail. Only the absolute lack of money and the inability to see where they can get any more funds to pay for the expense of war-preparedness will force the military element to accept a real disarmament." That was well said, and we should like to suggest that Mr. Edison make a phonograph-record of the whole of his very interesting conversation with Mr. Ford on the subject of disarmament. We should say that such a record would sell like hot cakes. But, come to think of it, that would inevitably make a tidy profit for Mr. Edison and presently the Government would come along and grab a big handful of the cash, and thus willy-nilly Mr. Edison would be making money to pay for more armaments. We wish that Mr. Ford had asked Mr. Edison to explain how he would prevent the Government from taking his money to spend on things he disapproves of, such as poison-gas preparedness, for instance.

SPEAKING of taxation reminds us of the gallant efforts to raise the wind that are being made by impecunious Governments in different parts of the world. Thus "liberated" Poland is now issuing a four-per-cent premium loan in bonds of 1,000 marks: "The attraction of the issue," says the London *Times* correspondent, "is that every week, for the next twenty years, a premium of a million marks will

be drawn by lot, which means that anyone who has 1,000 marks (at present worth about £1) to invest, will have the chance of becoming one of the 1,000 millionaires (in Polish marks) who will be created within the next twenty years." Even a respectable British dominion is not above this sort of thing, for we hear that the Queensland Government is so desperately hard put to it for funds that it has decided to promote a State lottery. The first prize will be £10,000, the second £2,000, and the third £1,000, with many other prizes of smaller amounts. Our own Mr. Mellon will, doubtless, look scornfully upon these schemes, but let him not be too proud; some day he may come to something very like it himself.

SCHOOL-AUTHORITIES in the Pacific States are proposing a scheme for the study of taxation in the public schools. The idea is for the National Educational Association to appoint a committee of five, one from each section of the Union, which shall itself study taxation for a year, and then formulate a system for its study by school-children. This seems good. There is only one trouble with taxation in the United States, and that is that nobody thinks about it. Plenty complain, multitudes grumble, some protest and many swear; but no one thinks. Perhaps the proposal of our enterprising friends in the West will help get rid of this defect. Henry George used to say that he did not care a straw what people thought about taxation if only they would think about it; but this is just what one generation after another of our citizenry has resolutely declined to do. Perhaps the organization of this study into institutional form may stimulate interest in the subject on the part of some of our journalistic brethren; we can think of nothing that would be more becoming to them or more likely to enhance their usefulness.

THE Interstate Commerce Commission has for the third time, so the news-dispatches say, clapped its veto upon Mr. Henry Ford's proposal to reduce freight-rates upon his Detroit, Toledo and Ironton Railway. This was to be expected, as an alternative to the logical course of inviting him to take charge of all the railways in the country and run them as competently and cheaply as he has run his own. Mr. Ford has now made another venture in transportation. He says he is disgusted with his deliveries by rail from Detroit to the Atlantic seaboard, and he proposes to substitute delivery by a fleet of thousand-ton gasolene barges from his plant at River Rouge over the Lakes route and down the Erie Canal. By this method he expects not only to reduce his costs, but also to beat the railway's time-schedule; and there is little doubt that he can do so. Hence it appears that Henry has laid open another interesting question in transportation-management. Can the reader, with a map of our available waterways in his hand, see any good reason why most of our low-grade freight should be transported by rail? There may be one, but we can not discern it.

MR. SAMUEL GOMPERS has gotten into the papers again, this time with the statement that "it is unfair to try to crush labour between the upper millstone of greed and the nether millstone of sovietism." He has even implied that if the unions fail, the employers will have to deal with the communists. This is all right, as far as it goes; but what we should like to know is, what will happen if the unions succeed and how are we to know whether they are succeeding or not? If the American Federation of Labour could have its way, what would it do? How, for instance, would it go about preventing the recurrence of conditions like those which have now brought greed and sovietism into such close proximity that labour is compressed into a very small space between them? If Mr. Gompers expects the upper millstone suddenly to turn into powder, he is likely to be disappointed. Some of the employers will yield, from time to time, but the number will never be large enough to give labour any real relief. Our notion is that if that upper millstone is ever to be moved at all, it will have to be lifted by those who bear its weight; and we are not inclined to be backward about suggesting that the workers should use all their power to do the job.

OF late there has been much protest against the novel practice of putting up unemployed men at auction in the public parks, and selling them to the highest bidder. The performance runs contrary to certain notions of human dignity and freedom which were supposed to have been vindicated at the time of the Civil War, and have since been held to be inviolable. Nowadays such notions as these seem to us to be a burden upon the community. Like all partial and incomplete conceptions of freedom, they become limitations upon freedom as soon as they come into general currency. This paper is interested not in the successive limitations, but in the thing itself. Somehow or other we have never seemed to be able to get very much stirred up about the business of crawling from one shell into another, and then celebrating the millennial quality of the change.

SOME zealous patrioteer or patriotrine, it appears, recently criticized the Orpheus Choir of Glasgow for not singing the English national anthem at its concerts. The conductor had enough Scots pluck to get his back up and make an extremely spirited reply, saying that it would be just as suitable to charge the choir with anti-Socialism because it did not sing "The Red Flag." As a matter of fact, he declared, neither the national anthem nor "The Red Flag" are great songs, and, therefore, however much one may agree with the sentiment of either, neither one has any place in a concert. "Thus we sing the music of the Greek and Roman churches because it is great music; no one suggests that we subscribe to their tenets. . . . Music knows no frontiers and no politics." This is something like! If a few orchestra-conductors in this country had possessed this worthy Scotsman's grit and gumption, the music-loving ones among us might fortunately have been spared one of the minor horrors of the late war.

THIS brings us to a subject that is very near our heart. Will not the influential musical organizations of America take thought for the morrow, and provide us against the next war with a national anthem that will come somewhere near passing muster as art? We adjure them in God's name to show this small measure of public spirit. In the whole world of doggerel there is no viler verse than that of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Imagine, just imagine, a national anthem beginning with "O say"! In the whole limbo of musical rubbish there is nothing cheaper and more tawdry than the music of this same anthem. Must nationalism once more impose upon our population the cruel and unusual punishment of having to listen to it? By way of "constructive suggestion" we offer the old tune, "St. Anne's," which is excellent music and is thoroughly popular, being, we think, in every church hymnal in the land. Those who have heard Sir Arthur Sullivan's harmonization of it are aware of its possibilities for choral use. We suggest, further, that this be set to the familiar words, "O God, our help in ages past," which are sufficiently good as poetry, and have at least the merit of dignity and impressiveness, which "The Star-Spangled Banner" most notably has not. We do not insist upon our choice, by any means, although we think it is an extremely good one; rather we offer it for the consideration of our musical organizations chiefly as an evidence of good faith.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

A BRITISH SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.

WE should like to call the attention of our British contemporaries to a speech made 1 August, by Mr. Robert M. La Follette, in the Senate of the United States. It deals with the subject of British influence in the Shipping Board. We have not hitherto mentioned it because we wished to wait and see whether the British press, especially those sections of it which represent labour and liberalism, would look into Senator La Follette's statements and say something about them. It seems to us that in the interest of peace and good feeling, they should do so. Senator La Follette brings serious charges against the British Government and the British shipping-interests. We, ourselves, know nothing of the facts; but Senator La Follette, as our contemporaries can readily ascertain for themselves, occupies a peculiar position in the Senate, almost a privileged position, one might say, with reference to any statement of fact that he may choose to make. His opponents on any public question, even his enemies, have never found it worth their while to put him on the defence of his facts, and they seldom try to do so.

Mr. La Follette reiterates the charge made last spring on the floor of the Senate by Mr. Kenyon, and made elsewhere on other occasions, that British influences are at work to determine the policy of our merchant marine, and that though the personnel of the Shipping Board has been changed, these influences are so well entrenched that the new Board can not escape them. "Men who are masquerading as the sponsors of an American merchant marine," the Senator said, "are the emissaries of Great Britain. They are to be found in the Commerce Department of this Government; they have had their representatives there for years." He quotes the report of Mr. Mitchell, who was appointed to investigate these peculiar activities of alien propaganda, as follows:

Notwithstanding the natural advantages I have enumerated and the fact that England enjoyed a practical monopoly as the sea-carrier for the great part of the world during the half-century period when the American exporter and importer was satisfied to move his merchandise in British bottoms, I am fully convinced that the shipowners of the United Kingdom have adopted other means by which they hope to eliminate the United States as a serious competitor on the high seas. Propaganda is the new weapon, and to-day they are conducting an active campaign within our own borders. Their object is to discourage the American people from supporting Congress in placing our mercantile marine upon a firm footing. Daily utterances in the news and editorial columns of the English press are of such tenor as to justify this statement, but, as additional proof, I cite the fact that Britishers well versed in all maritime matters have admitted to me that this method of breaking down our peace-time morale already has been employed with considerable success.

Senator La Follette goes on to say that there is an organization in England which has for its object the control of legislation all over the world in behalf of British commerce; and that there has never been an hour since our Shipping Board went into operation that this organization has not been busy in this country in order to control legislation in the interest of the British mercantile marine. He accuses British interests of planning a raid on the American seamen's law; and says that the attitude of the new Shipping Board is as acquiescent as that of the old. Finally, the Senator shows conclusively, in a long and carefully documented exposition, that British influence and British power

have "cleverly made it to the interest of our own shipping-concerns and financial institutions to continue British supremacy upon the seas."

We wish that our English contemporaries would sift these statements, and if they find them true, that they would say what they think about the friendliness of this policy. This paper has always striven hard for good relations between the peoples of England and America, invariably differentiating with the utmost care between these peoples and their Governments. We are compelled to point out to our English contemporaries that there is here the prime ingredient for misunderstandings of the first magnitude between peoples. Surely our contemporaries understand that human nature on this side of the Atlantic resents being clogged and bamboozled, quite as it does on the other side. Sir Gilbert Parker had the hardihood to publish an article in one of our leading monthly magazines, in some measure describing his activities as head war-propagandist for America. He says, in *Harper's Magazine* for March, 1918:

Among other things, we supplied 360 newspapers in the smaller States of the United States with an English newspaper, which gives a weekly review and comment of the affairs of the war. We established connexion with the man in the street through cinema-pictures of the army and navy as well as through interviews, articles, pamphlets, etc., and by letters in reply to individual American critics, which were printed in the chief newspaper of the State in which they lived, and were copied in newspapers of other and neighbouring States. We advised and stimulated many people to write articles; we utilized the friendly services and assistance of confidential friends; we had reports from important Americans constantly, and established association, by personal correspondence, with influential and eminent people of every profession in the United States, beginning with university and college presidents, professors, and scientific men and running through all the ranges of the population. We asked our friends and correspondents to arrange for speeches, debates, and lectures by American citizens. . . . Besides an immense private correspondence with individuals we had our documents and literature sent to great numbers of public libraries, Y. M. C. A. societies, universities, colleges, historical societies, clubs, and newspapers.

This kind of thing gets immediate results; it got them for Sir Gilbert Parker. But in the long run it does not pay. Eight out of ten Americans who read his confessions have a sullen, resentful sense of having been taken in by a liar and swindler; of having had their most generous instincts and impulses deliberately misdirected by a kind of moral confidence-man. This feeling is increasing in volume, and it bodes no good for the future; and the activities described by Senator La Follette are simply so much more to augment it. It is all very well to keep urging, as this paper continually does, that the motives and intentions of Governments are never those of peoples, and that Governments never serve the interests of peoples, but on the contrary, invariably retard and oppose them. It is all very well, too, to keep pointing out that the great interests, such as control the British mercantile marine and our own Shipping Board, are purely international and have no country. *Ubi bene, ibi patria*—wherever there is exploiting to be done, or a dividend to be picked up, there is their country. But all of this that can be said does not weigh against the exasperation set up by such performances as are recorded by Senator La Follette or those acknowledged by Sir Gilbert Parker. It is not hard, unfortunately, to transform one's justifiable hatred of these loathsome activities and one's resentment at having been bamboozled by them, into "an indictment against a whole people"; and that is the way whereby wars are prepared for.

There should never be anything but peace and good will between the British people and ours; but it will take a deal of keeping to keep that peace in the face of such revelations as Senator La Follette has spread on the pages of the *Congressional Record*. We simply pass the matter over to our British contemporaries as primarily their concern, asking them only how they would feel about it if they were in the place of the average decent and thoughtful American citizen. Probably they know what the Shipping Board has meant to us as taxpayers; it has meant \$3,396,208,-179.31. Possibly they know something of the proportion of this amount that we have had to charge off as wastage and stealage; it comes to considerably more than two-thirds. Our contemporaries may perceive that it is a sore subject; and possibly they may find it in their hearts to think that the surreptitious activities of British propaganda, if indeed they are found to be as Senator La Follette described them, may well be felt, under the circumstances, as an intolerable aggravation. If our English contemporaries think this, or anything like this, a few words of deprecation would be appropriate and, by us at least, would be uncommonly appreciated.

THE INEVITABILITY OF TAMMANY.

IMAGINE a great private estate inhabited and administered by its tenants-at-will and by its hired hands. The city of New York is an example; most American cities are examples. Is New York City, then, a private estate? The site of the city is; and it is sites, not improvements, that make private estates. Improvements are produced by industry, are maintained by industry, and through industry give way one by one to better improvements, or from lack of industry fall into decay; but sites are gifts of nature and endure for ever.

The site of New York City is as truly an estate in the proprietary sense, though its owners are many, as was ever any domain from which a feudal lord drew revenue; and more strictly is it a private estate, for the feudal lord's was burdened with obligations to an overlord, whereas the site-owners of New York City holds theirs unconditionally. Moreover, the city of New York is a great private estate; for the greatness of a private estate is determined by magnitude of revenue rather than extent of area, and have not the site-revenues of New York City leaped from the merely nominal of Peter Stuyvesant's day to millions upon millions in these days of the Astors?

Is it true, however, that this great private estate is administered by tenants-at-will and hired hands? By managers of their choice, yes. When it comes to voting at city elections, tenants-at-will and hired hands are in an overwhelming majority, just as they would be on any other private estate. Exclude them from the voting population of New York City, and even the New Yorker who loves the city, as all old New Yorkers do, would hardly venture to boast of it as having the electorate of a good-sized village. "Hired hands" means, of course, all who work for wages and salaries, and other terms of hire. Some may have proprietary interests in the estate, and so may some of the tenants-at-will; but neither would figure impressively in the tables of a census that separated the owners of the site of New York City from its other voting inhabitants.

Well, what of it? Nothing, except that the secret of the inefficiency of the administration of this great private estate—and it is reputed to be extremely inefficient—may very possibly lurk in the fact that its managers are not chosen by its owners, but are elected

by its hired hands and its tenants-at-will. Is not that suggestion enough to stimulate some fundamental thinking on the subject of voting-rights and property-rights in New York City?

For a long time, lovers of good government in New York have periodically complained of inefficient administration. Sometimes these good people have carried the municipal elections with that cry, and sometimes they have actually achieved what they have called an efficient Administration. Yet always at the next election the efficient Administration has been kicked into the political scrap-pile. Who has done the kicking? Evidently the tenants-at-will and the hired men living on the estate; for strangely enough, all but a few favourites of fortune among them seem to have a violent antipathy to good local government. Why is that?

That is a question which the editors of the *New Republic* undertook to answer at the beginning of the present municipal campaign in New York. Their presentation of the problem was clear, and up to their jumping-off place their answer was sufficiently courageous and impressive. The Fusion ticket appears to the *New Republic* to be of such a quality that if the Fusion candidates were defeated, the fair inference would be that a majority of the voters prefer inefficient to efficient administration. Asserting that the Fusionists include "a vast majority of the educated and well-to-do residents" of the city—"practically all New Yorkers who are interested in a clean, efficient Government and who are intelligently devoted to the social welfare of the people of New York or to the honest and business-like administration of their public affairs," the *New Republic* believes that "such an array of social power and ability"—which includes, too, all the newspapers except Mr. Hearst's—might "necessarily be able to carry the election." Yet alas! the editors of the *New Republic* have no expectation of that happy result. Recalling the "terrible defeat" of Mayor Mitchel for re-election in 1917, and attributing it largely to "the humbler people of New York" who "revolted against the consequences to themselves of government by capable and disinterested experts," our contemporary is ready to concede the forthcoming election to the enemy at the opening of the campaign. Mr. Mitchel's defeat in 1917 is regarded by the *New Republic* as being too significant to permit the hope of any other result this year. While our contemporary can see "a thousand reasons for" that defeat, none of them especially significant, it realizes that they were "all grouped around the discouraging fact that the very excellence of [Mr. Mitchel's] administration had condemned it to fatal unpopularity." By way of confirmation of this view, Mayor Mitchel's failure with an efficiency policy is contrasted with Mayor Hylan's success with an opposite policy, "the slack, easy-going, wasteful, irresponsible administration of . . . public business which" in 1917 the people of New York elected Mr. Hylan to give; and there is "nothing to indicate," laments the *New Republic*, "any grave or widespread popular dissatisfaction with the result." With admirable directness our contemporary goes to the root of the problem by admonishing "New Yorkers to seek a clean, able, socialized administration of the municipal business of New York, to take a larger longer, and more radical view of the obstacles to their success." The "fundamental trouble," we are told, "is social and economic."

Precisely so. But that is where the editors of the *New Republic* came to their jumping-off place, and here is the chasm into which they jumped: New

York is an overgrown accident of a city; therefore, it "lacks the community of consciousness, for building up in the minds of the voters an association between expert and efficient government and popular welfare." Therefore, the problem of better city government must "wait for its solution on a concentration by progressives upon the deeper problem of efficient local community-organization."

Is any such solution likely to come, "human nature being as it is"? If so, what could be the incentive? If the administration of the estate were improved, how would that prosper the tenants-at-will? Would not their prospects for better conditions in life in consequence of the improvement be subject to the keenest competition, and would not that fact turn all expectations of popular welfare into higher credit-balances at the banks for the benefit of the estate's owners? What else indeed could be the effect on a private estate of limited area and supporting an army of dependents? Moreover, it may be asked how would the hired hands attached to that estate be benefited by improved efficiency in management? Would not their better jobs be subject at once to keener competition? Would not the popular welfare they had learned to vote for, result in nothing better than higher profits to the owners of the estate? When the hired hands had learned to appreciate better-kept tenements, safe fire-escapes kept clear of all obstructions, scientifically measured living-spaces, and all the other benefits of efficient municipal administration, what would they say to the higher rentals which administrative improvements would enable the owners of the estate to exact?

Possibly the tenants-at-will and the hired hands of this great private estate that we call the city of New York are no clearer in their minds than are the esteemed editors of the *New Republic* about "the consequences to themselves of government by capable and disinterested experts" against which our contemporary says they have revolted. Yet, it may very well be that they are vaguely aware of the fact. If they are, their feeling on the subject might serve to explain their prejudices in favour of a continued inefficient administration of the estate.

If that indeed be the explanation, is there any other way of solving the problem of efficient administration of this private estate than the alternative of either transferring its control from its tenants-at-will and its hired hands to its owners, or of transforming it from a private into a public estate? To be sure, the alternative is an embarrassing one. It would mean divesting all but the estate's owners of their rights to vote for the city's managers, or else of divesting the owners of their property-rights in the site of the city. Embarrassment, however, is not the important consideration in a matter of this kind. The crucial question for the occupants of this estate is two-fold: first, is any other solution possible than the alternative we have named? Second, if there is not, then which of the two courses offers the best chance of escape from the present ruinous condition?

THE ROAD TO DISARMAMENT.

THE prospect of a new Alsace carved out of Silesia has led Colonel House, who was one of the better informed among the American delegates to the Peace Conference, to confess that the war, "instead of clearing up an ugly situation has made it worse." The continuance of the old methods of statesmanship is not only delaying the world's economic and financial recovery but has, of course, an immediate bearing on the question of disarmament. The national enmities

that are being consistently engendered are steadily increasing the military spirit in every country, and are perpetuating the fatal doctrine of the balance of power. It is perhaps natural that the participants in *ante-bellum* diplomacy should be in no hurry to acknowledge their past errors; their faithful adherence to the traditions of the old regime would not surprise us even if our respect for political government were greater than it is. But it would be idle to expect enlightened action from such a company as will meet in Washington on 11 November.

The outlook might be different if the delegates were chosen because of their knowledge of the laws of political economy; men, for example, as we said in a recent issue, of the type of M. Yves-Guyot. Destined as we are, however, to see another international gathering conducted by professional soldiers and diplomats, we can not blind ourselves to its probable outcome. All we can do in the circumstances is persistently to call attention to the published opinions of students of international comity. Thus, for example, Professor Loria's brief study of the economic foundations of international law contains much that is pertinent to the current discussion. If his conclusion is true that wars follow a decline in national revenue, the question of taxation assumes an important place in the consideration of international relations. Protection, for example, is a form of taxation which involves the foreigner, and it is one of the first expedients resorted to in the face of a dwindling income; yet protection itself is a form of conflict, relying as it does upon an alert army and navy to prevent smuggling and enforce agreements, and leading through the promotion of international rivalries to actual war. Repeated disasters will, no doubt, end in the long run by discrediting the tariff-system in the popular mind and clearing the way for a freedom of commercial intercourse; but it is too much to expect that politicians who regard war as inevitable, and who habitually breathe an atmosphere of compromise and chicane, will abandon a familiar method of national aggrandizement unless they are confronted with an overwhelming and vigorous public opinion.

Writing as far back as 1912, Professor Loria showed that the economic rivalry between Germany and Great Britain contained the seeds of war. He saw in the English Unionists, and the Liberal imperialists, who supported Mr. Asquith, the spokesmen of merchants looking for new markets. Similarly, he described the German Liberal Nationalists and Liberal Democrats, represented by the *National Zeitung*, as the political representatives of the manufacturers of Rhenish Prussia and Westphalia. It was the economic rivalries of these two commercial groups, supported by their respective Governments, that led to a war which proved the soundness of the dictum of Frederick II that "victories may be won by bayonets, but it is economic conditions that decide the issue of wars."

If, then, the attempt to check the decline in revenue by interference with economic processes is a cause of wars, the policy of unfettered trade is the simple remedy. History shows that the opening of new trade-routes has always resulted in turning men from war to industrial pursuits. Others besides Kant have regarded commerce as the great antagonist of war and have pictured armed conflict as disappearing under the influence of peaceful competition. We of this generation have ample opportunity to observe the ruinous results of an exclusive policy and to mark the ability of modern warfare to destroy trade and reduce the purchasing-power of the survivors. Professor

Loria reminds us that "wars are not undertaken for the purpose of opening new markets for the national industries, but to obtain advantages for the national capitalist at the expense of the foreign." Common sense must, therefore, counsel an approach to disarmament through the extension of equality of opportunity without regard to nationality. The clash of national groups, seeking the exploitation of monopolies, would inevitably cease with the withdrawal of those monopolies, as has happened in due measure whenever small States have been united in a free-trade union. If commerce, as Thomas Paine believed, diminishes the spirit both of patriotism and military defence, it is the solvent needed by those who would disarm the world.

It is well to observe, however, that trade begins with production and thus has its roots in the ground. Land-monopoly is the determining factor in the forced association of labour, which, in turn, restricts the worker's income and starts the decline of the revenue with fatal consequences. A reversal of the process is needed to attain the greatest possible division of labour, resulting in the maximum of production, and the setting up of the natural equilibrium which follows free association and is a prerequisite of tranquillity and peace.

A disarmament-conference which took account of these elementary principles would inspire universal confidence, for it would soon be made clear that neither nationalist passions nor class-prejudices could long survive where opportunities for employment were limitless, as they would be in the absence of monopoly. Disarmament might even begin at home, for with the abolition of wage-slavery would go the incentive to violence, and instead of uniting for self-protection the workingman would organize to increase production rather than to limit it. In other words, if political pressure were withdrawn the workers would in their turn cease to resort to political methods.

It would be well for the practical man who is suspicious of theories, to realize that armaments are dictated by policy. As long as national policy is one of exclusiveness in regard to immigration and trade, as long as it contemplates exercising control over dependencies and so-called backward countries, and competing for foreign concessions and strategic bases, it is simply waste of time to talk about disarmament. If, on the other hand, the nations whose representatives are soon to meet in Washington were to adopt a free and inclusive economic agreement, they would at once be in a position to practice a foreign policy as disarming as that of the Soviet Government in China and Persia. All that is needed is a complete reversal of the present course, and an abandonment of the predatory purposes underlying the Versailles treaty so that France might desist from her intrigues for European hegemony, and the United States, Great Britain and Japan substitute economic freedom for special privilege in the Far East. Such a policy is the one best calculated to repair the material damage of the war, and to produce a stable revenue for the nations that adopt it; but who expects the miracle to happen?

IN THE WILDERNESS.

A FLURRY of expectant gossip in the newspapers anent the opening of the winter's season at the Metropolitan Opera House, has recalled to us an experience which we like to haul up, from time to time, for re-examination. The setting for the incident is the interior of a diminutive theatre, perhaps an eviscerated grocery-store, which clings to the edge of one of those streets

that plunge down from the hilltops of San Francisco through the Italian quarter, to the "Barbary Coast" and the Bay. It is a gala night, for the Italian community is bidding farewell to its favourite conductor. The benches and the aisles of the stuffy auditorium are crowded beyond all the limits set by comfort and an absentee-police, and the operatic performance of the evening is already in full swing.

At the piano is the conductor himself. Sometimes half standing before the instrument, which constitutes his entire orchestra, he draws from it a torrent of sound that sweeps his body from side to side, forward and back, in movements which serve to guide his company of singers through the final flourishes of one of Verdi's operas. As the lights come on, the audience roars with delight; and the conductor stands bowing and smiling beside his piano. There is a great deal of bustling among the family groups, a great deal of crowding and pushing in the aisles, and presently the hero is loaded down with the offerings of the people; flowers in wreaths and bouquets, boxes appropriate to the size and shape of various articles of clothing, and—we remember it well—a pair of suspenders, unwrapped, unfurled, and innocent of every sort of disguise.

The presentation of the suspenders seemed to us, and still seems, a sort of allegory, for this bit of by-play was exactly typical of the manner in which the opera itself was presented and received; frankly, joyfully, with no ostentation, and no assumption that such music is properly to be met with only on state occasions, and under conditions of greatest formality. The Italian is not kept at a distance from his favourite art, either by reverence or by disdain. He is on terms of playful familiarity with the opera; and something tells us that if the workers in Italy had the opportunity to run things for themselves, they would not go much farther wrong in the matter of music than the Moscow Soviet did in drama, when it issued a list of recommended plays which included pieces by Gogol, L. N. Tolstoy, Turgenev, Chekhov, Gorky, A. Tolstoy, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Beaumarchais, Molière, Schiller, Ibsen, Shaw, Rolland, Verhaeren and Hauptmann.

Somehow or other, the European masses have been prepared for cultural self-determination to a degree hardly comprehensible here in the United States. Indeed, if one were asked to discover in this country an art which the American populace accepts on terms of easy intimacy, as the Italians do their opera, one would perhaps be obliged to fall back upon the cinema. Of late the attention of the critics has been so much concentrated upon the great possibilities of this art that the present status of the motion-picture, and the significance of its tremendous popularity, have been very generally—and very generously—disregarded. As long as the producers of motion-pictures continue to draw heavily upon the novel and the drama for material, the use that they make of this material will give some notion of the general temper of the cinema as compared with that of the other arts referred to. We have not made a long study of this subject, nor does it appear to us that such a study is necessary. Indeed, some of the producers seem to have supplied a rough measure of their own work by dropping the original titles of some of the plays and novels with which they have dealt, and substituting other titles which are, presumably, more appropriate to the pictured version of the tale. Du Maurier's "Peter Ibbetson" becomes "The Great Romance"; Pinero's "Letty" is rechristened "The Loves of Letty"; Schnitzler's "Affairs of Anatol" narrowly escapes being released as "Five Kisses"; Sir James M. Barrie's "Admirable Crichton," and Mrs.

Gertrude Atherton's "Noblesse Oblige" emerge from the studio as "Male and Female" and "Don't Neglect Your Wife." As though to protect the American public against any but the most primitive appeal, the films produced abroad under the titles "Du Barry" and "Anne Boleyn" have been advertised here as "Passion" and "Deception." Finally, to cap the climax, a Swedish company has presented in Scandinavia a picture called "Eyvind of the Hills," and has offered the same film here as "Love, the Only Law."

In one instance, we happen to have professional testimony as to the atavistic change which may take place when a drama is reincarnated as a photo-play. By some chance, Franz Molnar's tragic and elusive drama "Liliom" has fallen into the hands of the picture-makers. Their version of the play is being marketed as "A Trip to Paradise," and the *Exhibitor's Trade Journal* tells us that it is "another box-office money-maker that no exhibitor can go wrong on." In regard to the star who plays the unrecognizable part of Liliom, here called "Curley" Flinn, the *Journal* says:

Bert Lytell sure was the Jazz Kid as the barker at the roller-coaster on the island [Coney Island], and he played the part to the life.

In another paragraph headed "Points of Appeal," the *Journal* discourses elegantly, as follows:

A beautiful love element that will win the hearts of the beholders. And the struggles of the young married couple to make both ends meet will evoke the sympathies of the most hardened, all the while tugging at the heart-strings. And it has a most cheerful ending withal that will send them away with a smile to go with the tears. And the scenes in and about the amusement resort on the 'island' will recall, 'them were the happy days.'

If the American public did not cheerfully endure such perversions as this, then assuredly they would not be committed. This, however, does not dispose of the question whether the masses of our people have a positive desire for cheap and nasty stuff, or are simply indifferent to the quality of the material that is offered to them. It goes without saying that they do not want the symphony and the opera, as the foreigners do who crowd the galleries at our concerts, or wait in line in the snow, hoping for the opportunity to pay an extortionate price for standing room at the Metropolitan. This sort of thing, home-bred America pretty consistently refuses to do; and yet it is, perhaps, unfair to mark up a final judgment, until inquiry has been made as to how American audiences deport themselves when the best material, or something like the best, is offered to them in a matter-of-fact way, side by side with common trash.

Who is it that objects most seriously when the slick-haired Italian tenor departs from the routine of vaudeville, and soars into an operatic aria that sets his eyes flashing, and warms his heart with memories of provincial theatres overseas? Some American opera-goer may be disturbed, if there happens to be one present, for he is accustomed to think that such things should be done formally and elegantly, or not at all. The Italians in the gallery have no such superstition; they have sung these songs themselves, in the streets of their own cities, and in the cafés of the East Side; they feel themselves at home, they applaud most generously; and those Americans who do not know that they have been listening to "op'ry" are likely to be almost equally demonstrative.

See again what happens in the moving-picture palace when the lights are flashed on and the musicians who, until a moment before, were following the course of the film with appropriate hoof-beats, thunder, bear-growls, and the like, now come to life as an orchestra,

and sail away into a symphony that is often quite too much for them, but nevertheless brings them into the presence of the art that some of them have worshipped. When the music is finished, and the conductor makes the bow that heralds the orchestra's return to oblivion, is the audience unresponsive? The reader's experience will no doubt supply an answer here which is applicable in a variety of similar situations.

When New York's Capitol Theatre, "the largest playhouse in the world," interrupts its programme of motion-pictures to present a scene from some familiar opera; when the Rivoli, another metropolitan cinema-theatre, gives a few minutes to the exquisite grotesqueries of Adolph Bolm, the Russian dancer; when Fokin brings the first act of the Hippodrome's unwieldy circus to a close with an elaborate ballet, the effect upon the audience is always pretty much the same. The people appear to like this sort of thing about as well as they like trained elephants, golden curls, neglected wives, throbbing heart-strings, and all the other stuff that is supposed to guarantee large gate-receipts. There is no definite preference for the better sort of thing; but neither does there appear to be any definite rejection of the best that is offered. Indeed, it seems that the characteristic mood of the American audience is one of indifference to artistic quality, or the lack of it. Such a mood does not promise an early exodus from the lower levels of taste, but neither does it enforce the belief that America can never by any possibility be led forth from an artless wilderness.

THE GENUS IMPRESARIO.

WHAT are the uses of the genus impresario? In spite of varied and abundant testimony, I am not sure that I know the answer to that question. The subtle and taciturn gentleman who, for a good many years, has guided the destinies of New York's Metropolitan Opera House, and who, be it whispered, has even made grand opera pay, is said to be one of the busiest men in this busy world. He is busied with managing grand opera. It has been said of him that as chairman of the United States Steel Corporation he would be as great an administrator as he has proved himself to be in the field of opera; and yet a certain celebrated orchestral conductor, on leaving the Metropolitan in tempestuous circumstances which have never been fully explained, declared in his wrath that he, the conductor, if also appointed manager, could accomplish within two hours more work than the present occupant of that post had ever been known to accomplish in two weeks.

What, then, may the duties of an impresario be? He engages artists, selects operas, and casts operas. Naturally he pays to his artists the lowest salaries that he believes compatible with the box-office returns. If he proposes to make money, he casts his opera with a view to pleasing the public and raking in the public's cash. Sometimes his function must know a crafty variation. Suppose, for example, an artist to whom he pays a goodly sum does not please the public, it becomes his managerial duty to miscast that artist and show him—or her—to the public at his—or her—worst! Of course the artist has various means of retaliation, but they need not here concern us. When the opera and the artists have been chosen, the essential business of the impresario is accomplished; thereafter the debit and credit lies in the pockets and hands of a more or less responsive public.

The career of the late Mr. Oscar Hammerstein furnishes an illuminating example of the possibilities of impresariopship. Mr. Hammerstein did not give opera primarily to make money. He was always devoted to opera and when he became a rich man he made the giving of opera his hobby, just as another rich man might collect pictures or run a racing-stable. Mr. Hammerstein gathered about him no board of directors. He employed neither secretary nor bookkeeper, for he kept his accounts in his head and in his personal check-book. He answered all his correspondence with his own hand. Thus he stood quite alone, and obviously his day was a busy one. Yet he invariably found time every evening to sit on a kitchen-chair in the wings of his own stage and from that point of vantage watch every performance to his own satisfaction, or the reverse.

But then Oscar Hammerstein was a genius. He might have gone on giving opera much longer than he did, had it not been that at a fatal moment the genius forgot to be a genius. All the untoward circumstances of his final season at the Manhattan Opera House need not be gone into here. He had boasted that he stood alone, but when he found himself to be actually standing very much alone and in pretty deep waters, he felt hurt, abandoned. He left New York for London, determining there to show New Yorkers what they had lost, but in London too he still did not remember to be a genius.

The story is told that a certain influential gentleman whose opera Mr. Hammerstein had had the kindness to produce, offered in return to procure for his American patron a social following in the English capital. Accordingly one evening the gentleman in question brought to Mr. Hammerstein's new opera house one of the most puissant titled matrons in London society, and between the acts introduced the society-leader and the impresario to each other. Her ladyship graciously assured Mr. Hammerstein that she was greatly enjoying the performance, that she was so glad that he had had the idea of opening an opera house in London, that she would do her utmost to interest her friends in his project and was sure that they would all come to his performances. Now it happened that that evening Mr. Hammerstein happened to be standing very much alone. Without removing his legendary silk hat, merely pushing it back on his brow, and without relinquishing his legendary black cigar, he told her ladyship in the indescribable drollery of his speech how he had never asked help of anybody, how he never should ask help of anybody, how standing alone he had lived and would die, etc. etc. Her ladyship listened with interest; she may even have relished the humour of the situation; but she never set foot in Mr. Hammerstein's opera house again, nor did she send thither her numerous and fashionable friends. Opportunity had once more knocked at the door of the man of genius, but the spoilt child which was in Oscar Hammerstein had had the upper hand that night. His declaration of independence sounded the death knell of his London opera house.

Though the ordinary impresario lacks the genius, the picturesqueness, the compelling interest of Oscar Hammerstein, there is one thing he must have, namely: the ability to make the unanswerable rejoinder. That is, after all, the great diplomatic stock-in-trade of the successful impresario. Somebody once asked Mr. Hammerstein why a certain great artist was no longer singing in his company. Pulling a very long face the manager retorted, "Poor woman, she is blind." As a matter of fact the lady was even then appearing on the European stage, but there was no use in confronting the redoubtable Oscar with that fact. For him the woman was blind, and his questioner was silenced. Mr. Gatti-Casazza is more subtle in his command of the unanswerable retort. The longest head has no chance against the Napoleonic strategy of the eminent Italian manager's conversation.

So far I have discussed the impresario as he is to-day and as he has been in the past. Of course there is always the possibility that an impresario may produce opera for the sake of art, and art only, giving only the best works whether the public likes them or not; with great singers at no matter what cost; with the most modern stagecraft; and with an infinite thoroughness in preparation and production. But such things cost money. There are some people who believe that the rich gentlemen who now endow our grand-opera seasons could easily afford for art's sake to stand the loss that would be incurred. But the point of view of one of these gentlemen concerning a recent theatrical adventure of idealistic intention in New York City which failed dismally, especially on the financial side, is enlightening in this connexion. "The failure," he said, "proved that it filled no economic need."

I have sometimes thought what an absorbing pastime for a multimillionaire an ideal opera house would be, an opera house that is conducted without reference to personal cost or to the tastes of the general public. It would be the most exciting game in the world. Imagine, for instance, the inexpressible pleasure of giving the "Armide" of Gluck in such a house, with the collaboration of an ideal cast—the divine Mary Garden, let us say, for the enchantress Armide, Lucien Muratore as her Red Cross Knight; Marguerite d'Alvarez as the Spirit of Hate; Luisa Tetrazzini as the siren; Vanni Marcoux as the magician uncle; young Mario Chamlee for the Danish Knight; and for the various minor, but never unimportant, parts, the pick of the best remaining singers of all lands; a Pavlova, a Karsavina, with the old Russian Ballet ensemble, for the dances; scenery and costumes by Anisfeld or Robert Edmond Jones, by Geddes or Roerich

or Lee Simonson, and some conductor of the capability of Toscanini, Weingartner, Richard Strauss (provided he did not "improve"); and a chorus recruited and trained by Giulio Setti. That would be art with capital letters and grand opera *in excelsis*, and a rare, quintessential, and salamandrian joy to the giver! But it would take the bottomless pocket of a multimillionaire to pay the inevitable deficit. For unquestionably there is not the slightest economic need for anything of this sort.

PITTS SANBORN.

THE MYTH OF A GUILTY NATION: VII.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S speech at the Mansion House in July, 1911, after the German gunboat "Panther" had anchored off the Moroccan coast, gave an immense impulse to the jingo spirit in France, because it was taken as definite assurance of England's good faith in seeing her secret agreements through to a finish. M. Caillaux, the French Premier, appears to have had his doubts, nevertheless, inasmuch as the British Foreign Office did not give a straight reply to the French Foreign Office's inquiry concerning British action in case the Germans landed a force in Morocco. He says:

Are we to understand that our powerful neighbours will go right through to the end with the resolve which they suggest? Are they ready for all eventualities? The British Ambassador, Sir Francis Bertie, with whom I converse, does not give me formal assurances. It is said, of course, that he would see without displeasure the outbreak of a conflict between France and Germany; his mind works in the way attributed to a number of leading British officials at the Foreign Office.

M. Caillaux here suggests the same suspicion of British intentions which the Belgian diplomats at London, Paris and Berlin intimate continually throughout their correspondence since 1905.¹ He accordingly favoured a less energetic policy towards Germany, and was thrown out of office. Count de Lalaing reported from London, 15 January, 1912, that the revelations which provoked this political crisis were disagreeable for the English Government. "They seem to prove," he says, "that the French Premier had been trying to negotiate with Berlin without the knowledge of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and his other colleagues, and this is naturally disquieting to a Government whose interests are bound up with those of France, and which accordingly can ill tolerate any lapses of this kind." He adds:

These revelations have also strengthened the impression that M. Caillaux had recently favoured an ultra-conciliatory policy towards Germany, and this impression was felt all the more painfully in English official circles, as the full extent of the tension between London and Berlin caused by the Cabinet of St. James's loyal behaviour towards the Cabinet at Paris had hardly been grasped. People in England are reluctant to face the fact that they have been 'more royalist than the King,' and have shown themselves even less accommodating than the friend they were backing. . . . Accordingly the press unanimously hails with delight the departure of M. Caillaux, and trusts that sounder traditions may be reverted to without delay.

¹ This is worth noticing. It is sometimes said that the Belgian diplomats were pro-German, but pro-German, as we all know, is a mere epithet and means nothing but that the person who uses it dislikes something about the person against whom it is used. When it came to a possible infringement upon Belgian interests by Germany, as in the case of the Congo, for example, the Belgian diplomats do not show themselves pro-German, by any means; nor is there anything in their correspondence to indicate any especial love or leaning towards Germany. This may be put upon proof by anyone who will read Mr. E. D. Morel's translation of the volume. Besides, would it not be rather odd that the Belgian Foreign Office should fill, not one or two, but all of its most important diplomatic posts with partisans whose information would inevitably be biased and therefore misleading? The point to be remarked is that *all* these neutral observers adopt the same tone and comment in the same way upon the same issues. Not only Baron Greindl and his successor at Berlin, Baron Beyens, exhibit this distrust of British diplomacy and recognize the economic grounds underlying British sentiment towards Germany; so do M. Leghait, Count d'Arschot Schoonhoven and Baron Guillaume, the Belgian representatives at Paris; and so do Count de Lalaing and M. de Cartier, at London. All these men without exception, speak as though their point of view on these matters were well understood by Baron de Favereau and M. Davignon, who were at the head of the Foreign Office; and it is surely incredible that the Foreign Minister of a country in the ticklish position of Belgium would deliberately arrange to obtain biased and partial information for a period of ten consecutive years, and from three capitals at once. As patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel, so the charge of pro-Germanism is the last resource of ignorant bad temper.

This comment on the position of M. Caillaux is one of the most interesting observations to be found in these documents.

The Balkan war took place in 1912, and the whole history of the year shows the most mighty efforts of European politicians—efforts which seem ludicrous and laughable in spite of their tragic quality—to avert with their left hand the war which they were stirring up with their right. Mr. Lloyd George is right in saying that no one really wanted war. What every one wanted, and what every one was trying with might and main to do, was to cook the omelette of economic imperialism without breaking any eggs. There was in all the countries, naturally, a jingo nationalist party which wanted war. In Russia, which was then busily reorganizing her military forces which had been used up and left prostrate by the war with the Japanese, the pan-Slavists were influential and vociferous, but they were not on top. In England there was a great popular revulsion against the behaviour of the Government which had so nearly involved the English in a war against Germany the year before; and Mr. Asquith's Government, which was pacifist in tendency, was meeting the popular sentiment in every way possible, *short of the one point of revealing the secret engagements which bound it to the French Government and contingently to the Russian Government.* Lord Haldane undertook an official mission to Berlin, which was attended with great publicity and was popularly supposed to be of a pacificatory nature; and really, within the limits of the Franco-English diplomatic agreement, it went as far as it could in the establishment of good relations. In fact, of course, it came to nothing; as long as the diplomatic agreement remained in force, it could come to nothing, nothing of the sort could come to anything; and the diplomatic agreement being guarded as a close secret, the reason why it must come to nothing was not apparent. The German Government also made tremendous efforts in behalf of peace; and it must be noted by those who accept the theory upon which the treaty of Versailles is based, that if Germany had wished or intended at any time to strike at the peace of Europe, now was the moment for her to do so. Instead, the German Emperor in person, and the German Government, through one of its best diplomatic agents, Baron von Marschall, met every pacific overture more than half-way, and themselves initiated all that could be thought of. "There is no doubt," wrote Baron Beyens from Berlin, "that the Emperor, the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (von Kiderlen-Wächter) are passionately pacifists." Baron Beyens again says, 28 June, 1912, "The Emperor is persistent and has not given up hopes of winning back English sympathies, just as he has succeeded up to a certain point in obtaining the confidence of the Tsar, by the force of his personal attractions." Those who believe in the extraordinary notion of an unprepared and unsuspecting Europe, should read the diplomatic history of the year 1912, when all the chief officeholders in England and on the Continent were struggling like men caught in a quicksand, or like flies on fly-paper, to avert, or if they could not avert, to defer the inevitable war.

In one country, however, the jingo nationalist and militarist party came on top; and that country was France. M. Caillaux was succeeded by Raymond Poincaré; and in January, 1913, Poincaré became President of the Republic. Up to 1912, the people of France were increasingly indisposed to war and were developing a considerable impatience with militarism, and

the French Government was responsive to this sentiment. It knew, as Baron Guillaume remarked at the time of the Agadir incident, that "a war would be the death-knell of the Republic." M. Caillaux seems to have measured the feelings of his countrymen quite well. Baron Guillaume says that after the dispatch of the "Panther," the British Cabinet's first proposal was that the British and French Governments should each immediately send two men-of-war to Agadir; and that the French Cabinet strongly objected. Again, he says in his report of 8 July, 1911, "I am persuaded that Messrs. Caillaux and de Selves regret the turn given to the Moroccan affair by their predecessors in office. They were quite ready to give way, provided they could do so without humiliation."

The speech of Mr. Lloyd George at the Mansion House, however, which was taken by the French (and how correctly they took it became apparent on 3 August, 1914) as a definite assurance of British support against Germany, gave the militarist-nationalist party the encouragement to go ahead and dominate the domestic politics of France. It put the Poincaré-Millerand-Delcassé element on its feet and stiffened its resolution, besides clearing the way in large measure for its predominance. On 14 February, 1913, Baron Guillaume reports from Paris thus:

The new President of the Republic enjoys a popularity in France to-day unknown to any of his predecessors. . . . Various factors contribute to explain his popularity. His election had been carefully prepared in advance; people are pleased at the skilful way in which, while a Minister, he manœuvred to bring France to the fore in the concert of Europe; he has hit on some happy phrases that stick in the popular mind.

The career of M. Poincaré, in fact, and his management of popular sentiment, show many features which, *mutatis mutandis*, find a parallel in the career of Theodore Roosevelt. Baron Guillaume adds, however, this extremely striking observation concerning the popularity of M. Poincaré:

But above all, one must regard it as a manifestation of the old French chauvinistic spirit, which had for many years slumbered, but which had come to life again since the affair of Agadir.

In the same communication to the Belgian Foreign Office, Baron Guillaume remarks:

M. Poincaré is a native of Lorraine, and loses no opportunity of telling people so. He was M. Millerand's colleague, and the instigator of his militarist policy.

Finally, the first word that he uttered at the very moment when he learned that he was elected President of the Republic, was a promise that he would watch over and maintain all the means of national defence.

M. Poincaré had not been in office two months when he recalled the French Ambassador at Petersburg, M. Georges Louis, and appointed in his stead M. Delcassé. Concerning this stupendous move, Baron Guillaume reported 21 February, 1913, to the Belgian Foreign Office thus:

The news that M. Delcassé is shortly to be appointed Ambassador at Petersburg burst like a bomb here yesterday afternoon. . . . He was one of the architects of the Franco-Russian alliance, and still more so of the Anglo-French *entente*.

Baron Guillaume goes on to say that he does not think that M. Delcassé's appointment should be interpreted as a demonstration against Germany; but he adds:

I do think, however, that M. Poincaré, a Lorrainer, was not sorry to show, from the first day of entering on his high office, how anxious he is to stand firm and hold aloft the national flag. That is the danger involved in having M. Poincaré at the Elysée in these anxious days through which Europe is passing. It was under his Ministry that

the militarist, slightly bellicose instincts of the French woke up again. He has been thought to have a measure of responsibility for this change of mood.

M. Georges Louis, who had represented the French Government at Petersburg for three years, was a resolute opponent of the militarist faction in France, and was therefore distinctly *persona non grata* to the corresponding faction in Russia. At the head of this faction stood Isvolsky, who was a friend of M. Poincaré and a kindred spirit; hence when M. Poincaré became Premier, an attempt was made to oust M. Louis, but it was unsuccessful. M. Delcassé, on the other hand, is described by Mr. Morel as "the man identified more than any other man in French public life with the anti-German war-party." Mr. Morel, in commenting on the appointment of M. Delcassé quotes the following from a report sent by the Russian Ambassador in London to the Foreign Office in Petersburg. It was written four days after the appointment of M. Delcassé, and quite bears out the impression made upon the Belgian agents.¹

When I recall his [M. Cambon, the French Ambassador in London] conversations with me, and the attitude of Poincaré, the thought comes to me as a conviction, that of all the Powers France is the only one which, not to say that it wishes war, would yet look upon it without great regret. . . . She [France] has, either rightly or wrongly, complete trust in her army; the old effervescing minority has again shown itself.

The next paper will continue this examination, with particular reference to the Three Years' Service law in France, and to the corresponding military measures in Germany. What I desire to show is the logical connexion between the attitude of Great Britain towards the affair at Agadir and the subsequent rise of the French militarists; and it will of course be remembered that it was the secret arrangement between Great Britain and France in 1904, over an economic monopoly in Morocco, which primarily determined that attitude.

HISTORICUS.

THE LAND-WAR IN NORTHERN ITALY

"RICUPERAZIONE AGRICOLA" was the slogan of the recent national congress of the *Confederazione dell'Agricoltura*, the union of Italian landed proprietors; a phrase which may be interpreted in many ways—one interpretation being that of the gang of armed *Fascisti* who swarmed through the streets of Bologna a few weeks ago shouting their irresponsible refrain of "Eje, eje, allalà," as they set fire to the headquarters of the labour-unions and the agricultural leagues.

North from Bologna along the sea-coast to Venice and Treviso, stretches the western half of the Adriatic Delta district, the richest agricultural section of Italy. For decades it has been populated by a prosperous, conservative class of small landowners and unionized tenant-farmers, well-versed in scientific, intensive cultivation. Between them and the day-worker yawns a gulf, both psychological and economic—a fact that has been of frequent benefit to the employers. The socialists call these tenant-farmers *i carabinieri della proprietà*—property-guards—but the tenant-farmers retort that only by contracting for a share of the products can they be insured of employment during the entire year. Little absenteeism exists, and conditions have always been better than those obtaining elsewhere in Italy. The large owners have shown an intelligence that is reflected in their ability to group themselves into powerful co-operative banks and purchasing-agencies.

Yet this particular section of the country suffered a

great destruction of property last year at the time of the "occupations"; 12,000,000 lire worth of damage was done, the proprietors declare. In the provinces of Venice, Padua, Ferrara, and Bologna, many villas and crops were burned. In Ferrara, the production dropped from 900,000 quintals in 1919 to 300,000 in 1920. Only the Polesine was exempt from violence.

Several factors had been at work thus to change the attitude of the tenant-farmers. The most potent was the incessant propaganda of the socialists advocating collective ownership of the land. To offset this, many of the larger planters, especially in the province of Bologna, even before the war, had created "colonies" of farmers, not the old patriarchal colonies that existed five or six decades ago, but co-operative groups, each possessing a certain measure of autonomy—a salutary reform. But during the war, several decrees were enforced in behalf of the migratory worker, and the proprietors seized the opportunity to apply them to the colonists and tenants. Thus the tenant-farmers were stimulated to greater war-time productive effort, the fruits of which went to the proprietors. Many, therefore, allied themselves with the agricultural *sindacati*. Propaganda and resentment drew to a head during the general revolutionary movement of last year, when by strikes, threats, and occupations, the owners were forced to submit the administration of their farms, the hiring of labour, etc., to league-control.

Formerly the holder of the *Ufficio di Colocamento*, who attended to the business of sub-letting and labour-hiring, was a petty tyrant and grafter. Placing this office into the hands of the representatives of the farmers, established the right of all league-members to employment, even if it entailed shorter hours and reduced wages for all; and excluded from employment all non-members. The farm-workers and tenants showed an ability to manage their colonies, paying special attention to discipline and efficiency. This year's crop-estimates indicate increased production in this area.

Immediately following the recent Congress, however, attempts were made, and are still being made, to break the pacts, and again to reap the benefit of increased production, and at the same time strike a mortal blow at the leagues. The methods followed have varied slightly in different provinces, but everywhere they rest upon *Fascisti* terror and violence. These efforts are, therefore, a part of the general wave of reaction which has been sweeping Italy of late. The *Fascisti* are hand in glove with the landowners and, in many places, with the police. The approved procedure is for twenty to a hundred *Fascisti* to drive in motor-trucks to the house of the president or the secretary of the local league, or to the *Ufficio di Colocamento*, hammer on the door in the name of the police—breaking it down if necessary—murder the official on the spot, or drag him for miles about the country-side, sequester him for days, immerse him in icy water, beat him, tie him naked to a tree, or perpetrate a dozen fiendish punishments. The members of their victim's family are frequently thrust out on the highroad while their house is burned. Throughout the Delta district the proverb runs: "When the police knock on the door at night, Death enters." In the large towns, the headquarters of the league, the trade-unions, and the co-operative societies, and their libraries and printing-plants, are demolished by the *Fascisti*.

According to the *Critica Sociale* for 30 June, there occurred between 3 January and 9 May in the small province of Ferrara alone, no less than forty-five

¹ Of course, it is possible that Count Benckendorff was pro-German too!

such punitive expeditions, accompanied by shooting, bomb-throwing and assaults on private houses; forty-two league and three labour-union headquarters, ranging in value from 2,000 to 250,000 lire, were burned; and twenty-one Clerical and Socialist municipal administrations were terrorized into resigning.

Other weapons than these of *Fascisti* violence have been used against the league. In the province of Bologna, members of the league-committees are frequently arrested on charges of extortion, personal violence or intimidation. The charge of extortion is based on the committees' disciplinary orders, which include the use of the boycott and the fine against recalcitrant members. In order to avoid arrest, the league-committees have been forced to desist from all attempts to run colonies upon an efficient basis. The charge of intimidation usually results from the use of propaganda directed against those colonies that are loyal to the landowners. In some instances the houses and fields of these colonies have been burned, probably by irresponsible and over-zealous members of the league, though members of the league-committees have vehemently assured me that the *Fascisti* are alone responsible for these outrages. The boycott of individual workers who refuse to join the local league, although this must necessarily be the *sine qua non* of an autonomous colony system, has resulted in the frequent pre-ferment of the charge.

It is, therefore, not surprising to learn that in many localities, as a result of this terrorism and official discrimination, the peasant-organizations have been completely disrupted. In the Polesine, over 35,000 peasants have been ejected from their tenancies. The weakening of the organization in other districts is indicated by the loss of all right of collective autonomous administration. In very few places have the peasants been able to withstand the combined power of the employers' associations, the *Fascisti*, the police, and the propaganda of the local press.

This reactionary power was greatly strengthened by the recent national elections. "Agricultural Recovery" included a programme of political organization and propaganda, but *Fascisti* violence prevented any honest expression at the polls. As a result, the Confederation of Agriculture has flung a wedge of twenty-five landowners into the national Chamber, who, with the forty-five *Fascisti*, have been instrumental in overthrowing Premier Giolitti.

What, then, is the programme of the landed proprietors? Merely to break the leagues, eject the workers, let the lands lie idle until they, the owners, can reassume complete control? A large landowner recently expressed his ideas to me on the subject, in these words: "Our programme—it is not convenient for us at present to disagree with the *Fasci di Combattimento*—is the gradual breaking up of the land into very small plots, this to be done by recreating the small renter, perhaps the perpetual owner. We have already taken steps to reduce the rental rates. All this should be done with the community-idea in view. We should endeavour to create a community-life, a community-culture, and community-industries in order to reduce the cost of living."

The small farmers of Northern Italy—like the proprietors—have built up powerful co-operative banking- and purchasing-societies. They have proved their ability to manage large areas on a co-operative basis. How long will they rest content with temporarily lowered rentals and a benevolent fostering of the community-idea?

CARLETON BEALS.

WITHOUT BENEFIT OF CLERGY.

XI: THE PHARISEE'S LADY FRIEND.

THE eyes of Simon's lady friend must have blazed when she crossed the courtyard of the Pharisee's house and burst in upon that little dinner he was giving to some men who had been asked to meet Jesus. Now, Simon's lady friend was a sinner or Luke would not have said so, but we are not therefore to infer in the fashion of the theologians that Simon's lady friend was a woman of the streets. When she burst into the room and shot those eyes of hers—wonderful eyes they must have been!—from one to another of the men reclining upon the couches, Simon, we may well believe, despite his infatuation, was a trifle embarrassed. Simon loved the lady, possibly with the hopeless infatuation of the moth for the star, for she was beyond all question his social superior. That detail gives us the atmosphere of this romance in the life of Simon the Pharisee. If there had been an affair between Simon and this lady it proceeded along the lines of the tragedy that involved Catullus, the supreme lyric poet of Rome, with the light Lesbia. Lesbia must have been, in her way, a counterpart of Simon's lady friend in this case.

Simon was a man of substance, belonging to that party among the Jews which most abominated the Roman yoke, which lived on in the hope of a Messiah—a Messiah appearing in pomp and circumstance to deliver his people from Cæsar. The vulgarity and the rudeness of Jesus were unspeakable to Simon, but Simon was important enough and tolerant enough to be able to overlook the social indiscretions of a mere carpenter's son. Simon, moreover, believed in the immortality of the soul and in the rewards and punishments of a hereafter, and he was, therefore, curious on the whole subject of the spiritual life. It is probable that Simon's first impression of Jesus was not unlike Browning's idea of Sludge, the medium. It was the Pharisee's lady friend—the woman who was a sinner—who divined the presence of a spiritual genius of the highest order.

Luke omits the name of the lady, a circumstance confirming one's ideas of his rare restraint, and suggesting the possibility that the husband of this woman was not only rich but of a powerful family. She was a clever creature as well as a "light" one according to the classification of the younger Dumas, a writer who, like Luke, was expert in the psychology of her type. Certainly, our theologians do not understand the type, as any Christian may see for himself by studying a commentary on Luke's gospel. One would actually infer from what the clergy say about this woman who was a sinner that she was on a level with David Copperfield's little Em'ly or with the "one more unfortunate" of Tom Hood's poem.

She walked in upon Simon and his guests with all the assurance of the married woman in that Hellenized Jewish world. She makes us all think of Cleopatra, for her tears could be as passionate as those of the Egyptian Queen, her deportment as poetically wild, her spiritual vision infinitely greater; yet one must infer that had Cleopatra seen Jesus she, too, would have thrown Antony over, anointed the Master's feet, and emerged from her sins like a butterfly out of a cocoon. The woman that was a sinner took Simon by storm just as Lesbia took Catullus by storm. She seems to have had a way of walking in on him like one of Paul Bourget's heroines, carrying some breath of perfume to an infatuated man and shedding her tears divinely.

After her first swift glance, the woman hastened to the feet of Jesus. He was reclining, like the rest, with his head towards the table, his arm upholding his head and his elbow on a cushion. His toes, no doubt, seemed horribly scarred to her and the nails broken, as she looked at them from behind the couch. A comparison of the feet of Jesus with the scented and well-groomed extremities of the sandalled sybarites around him first drew the woman's tears, for she knew that this man with the broken feet was the saviour of the world. Skilled she must have been in the arts she now exemplified, as she wiped the feet of Jesus with the hair of her head. The other guests did not

deign to notice these anointings and these kissings. Comment would have been "barbarian" or, in the vocabulary of Mr. Podsnap, "not English." Not for a moment did the least intelligent of the men there misunderstand the spirit of the woman's action, any more than the denizens of the slums of Alexandria misunderstood the sallies and the moods of Cleopatra when she banded words with them. It was all very "ancient," very "classical," very Hellenic, nothing that a modern clergyman would see the point of, or that Jesus would miss.

There is much in the manner of the telling of the tale in Luke's gospel also to suggest that Simon the Pharisee and his lady friend were in that stage of coolness that always intervenes between a lover's quarrel and the sweets of a reconciliation. Perhaps Simon had invited Jesus in the first place at the lady's instigation, for she was a lady as well as a sinner, and was no more compromised socially by what so many knew of her than Lesbia was compromised through the indiscretions of Catullus. Later on, perhaps, Simon and the lady had had a quarrel over Jesus—was he to be received on the footing of a gentleman? For example, the news of that feast at the house of the Pharisee, the list of the guests, the details of the service—she knew all about these things, and that, in turn, suggests the nature of her intimacy with Simon. Perhaps the lady's husband was a very old man who allowed her to do as she pleased.

Jesus had actually been received, the lady saw, as if he were the scum of the earth. He was rated as a black-guard, a ruffian, a man lifted for the night from where he belonged, in the gutter or the back alley. Jesus was, perhaps, expected to entertain a gentleman's guests with his wizardries or his healings. Perhaps there would be a lack of food and Jesus could repeat the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand on a small scale. He was thus a mountebank to Simon and to the guests of the Pharisee generally. That was not the attitude of the woman who was a sinner. She was all the more infuriated, possibly, because the guests in Simon's house were well known to herself as snobs, creatures come together to grin at the table-manners of Jesus as well as at his ethics.

Simon thought that Jesus was not enough of a gentleman to detect the omission of the water for the feet, the osculation, the ointment for the head. These were details of an etiquette taken over from the Greeks by the Jews and handed on by the Jews to the Romans. The Romans were too coarse to take Greek civilization directly from the Greeks. The Jews, then, were the "go-betweens," exactly as they now act as intermediaries between the arts and the Americans. Simon had that amused contempt for Jesus which made the Pharisee presume too much. When the woman that was a sinner burst in upon the party, Jesus had been reduced to the social level of a coloured bishop at the banquets of a white hierarchy. In all this, Simon gave what Balzac styles the measure of a superior impertinence.

The Pharisee soon recovered from his first dismay at the sight of his lady friend. She had not betrayed Simon to Jesus, that was evident, and previously Simon must long have risked advances to the sinner that might be revealed by a malicious woman in a sarcastic mood. Jesus evidently knew nothing, suspected nothing. Simon no sooner inferred this much than his condescending toleration of Jesus was transformed into a feeling of distrust. Jesus he felt, must be a charlatan, for he had not divined regarding the woman that was a sinner what Simon himself would have seen at once had Lesbia burst in to wipe the feet of Catullus with her hair, or had Cleopatra, let us say, turned up to look at the feet of Mark Antony. The whole episode was now on a very low level in the eyes of Simon the Pharisee. Naturally! Those perfect Anglo-American ladies whose Christianity finds expression through the medium of an archdeacon's refined conception of Jesus would be anything but edified if by some miracle of divination they suddenly beheld the Jesus who chid Simon the Pharisee. That Jesus was rough in manner, rude of speech, a recipient of gifts from fallen women. On the Bowery of the Tammany Dick Croker, Jesus would have been a pimp or a "cadet" and in the vocabulary of

the American college graduate a "rough-neck." All the efforts of a blinking clergy in our time can not obscure the truth that Jesus was no gentleman in any sense of the term recognized by gentlemen nowadays. The circumstance that Jesus rose from the dead, gave sight to the blind and stilled the tempest, misleads many people who forget that these are things no gentleman ever does—not even the clergy.

"Simon," said Jesus suddenly, "I have somewhat to say unto thee."

This guest from the slums was forgetting himself. The wine must have gone to his head. In all probability he had been spoiled by the attentions of the woman at his feet. Simon did not forget that however egregious a humbug Jesus might be he was there as his guest—a guest with his feet now washed and wiped.

"Master," replied Simon condescendingly, "say on!"

Jesus related the case of the debtor who owed five hundred pence and the debtor who owed fifty. Each was forgiven. Which felt the more grateful to his creditor? Simon conjectured that it was the debtor who had been forgiven most. His interest was languid. His older guests may have yawned behind their hands. The younger ones, perhaps, stole looks at the woman that was a sinner still. Jesus to these men was not poetical in the sense that a portrait of Shelley is poetical. Jesus here was not elegant and radiant on a stained-glass window or blessed with such a temperament as is described in early Italian sonnets to sweet saints. Neither was the figure of Jesus conventionalized for Simon and his friends by the Easter cover-designs or Christmas numbers of twenty-cent American magazines. Simon and his guests that night had this immense advantage—they did not have to depend for their notions about Jesus upon either a Christian clergy or a commercialized press.

"Seest thou this woman?" asked Jesus, turning to Simon's lady friend. "I entered into thine house; thou gavest me no water for my feet but she hath washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head."

Simon was too well bred to interrupt, but he probably noted the fact that Jesus understood good Greek etiquette after all.

"Thou gavest me no kiss," proceeded the Master, "but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet."

What would some of the other young men there not have given for just such an act of homage from Simon's lady friend! The love bestowed by women upon the man whose thought is spiritualized can never be understood by him whose thought is materialized. Jesus was displaying such bad manners, too! He was taking his host to task for not treating him like a gentleman. As if Simon the Pharisee would anoint with oil the head of a pimp! Naturally they asked, when Jesus assured Simon that the many sins of the woman were forgiven: "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" The climax of their stupefaction was not reached until Jesus said to the woman: "Thy faith hath saved thee—go in peace!" Simon the Pharisee had lost his light lady friend for ever.

ALEXANDER HARVEY.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

THE "ABSOLUTE" POEM.

SIRS: To find one's way through the art of German expressionism is like wandering with whirling brain under the livid glass firmament of some huge conservatory and attempting to label outrageous orchids; or adventuring through some vast machinery-hall with a thousand models working and stamping bewilderingly. In this exuberant art, we encounter an individualism no longer arrayed in groups or schools, but cloven sharp and sheer, isolated like so many islands, so many peaks. The encompassing medium, like the sea or the air, is all that the artists have in common—the concept of the expressionistic. We collide here with the eternal protestant, with Luthers in art, ideologues, hard-bitten idealists, each—with defiance like

a dagger between his teeth—proudly climbing his own Golgotha, Pissgah or Olympus. Some of them are figures of impressive proportions, some of them heroic: Jackel, Waske, Krauskopf, Heckendorf, Pechstein, Melzer, Cesar Klein, Scharff, Kokoschka, Rohlf, Schmidt-Rottluff, Heckel, Kirchner, and others—all painters. If they have not achieved liberation for art, they have achieved it, each in his own way, for the artist, each for himself. Their works are published in large and beautiful portfolios at enormous prices, in limited editions, and are usually oversubscribed.

The antithesis between impressionism and expressionism is not always clear. The expressionist says: I will not let the outer world impinge upon me and use me as a recording or interpreting instrument. I am the recorder, the interpreter of my own inner feelings, thoughts, moods and emotions; and these I express directly, abstractly, free of the thralldom of the object, unburdened by the material, the thing, or the image of the thing. I paint the thing, as I paint man, from within: I interpret the soul. The impressionist claims also to interpret the soul. There remain, perhaps, in the last analysis, only the greater intensity and immediacy of expressionism and the abstraction and ultimate simplification of its terms and media. Objectless art.

Boring and blasting persistently into the cliff of petrified form in every art, German *Expressionismus* has struck a new vein. Gushes forth, naked of all message or meaning, the well-spring of the "absolute" poem. So far, there is but one example of this. It is called "Ango Laina," and is the work of Rudolf Blümner.

Blümner is one of the leading forces in the movement, or rather the institution of the "Sturm"; for institution it has become under the energetic directorship of Herwarth Walden. Before his fiery conversion to expressionism, Blümner was a well-known actor and reciter of the intellectual school. Since then, he has become the dynamic interpreter and champion of expressionistic art—an uncompromising, impregnable champion, fortified with a plangent voice that is like a tocsin, a torrential pen for ever on the offensive, and a face gouged hollow and burned out with the intensity of his æsthetic fanaticism.

For years [he declares], I have contented myself with establishing the absolute dramatic or recitative speech, even in connexion with the word. I have often declared that, to the creative actor, the words of a poem or a play (*Dichtung*) must prove an obstacle; whilst for the uncreative actor they provide an auxiliary means to the formation of tone. The best actors, to be sure, command their own melodies, but only upon the basis of words and sentences and only when these have a meaning. Our actors enact a *meaning*. And we give them praise when they enact not merely the meaning of the words, but of the whole. Deprive them of the basis of this meaning and they become dumb, uncreative.

My own efforts to render an independent creative melody were either doomed to remain futile so long as I confined myself to non-expressionistic poetry, or to lead to a cleavage between my rhythmized melody and the usually unrhythmic or, at best, metric phases of these earlier poems. It is only expressionistic poetry—that is, the conceptually a-logical but æsthetically logical combination of words which rendered possible a lingual-melodic rhythmization, leading to a unity.

But expressionistic poetry was still fettered to the word, and every word dragged in its wake a tangled network of fixed or implied meaning, as in these lines by Johannes Becher:

The bathing-master bleats. . . . Now lust arbours
Down from hill to sea. Ruin-land.
Moon in cypresses spanned high.
Quicksilvergleams on skullcoasts ivory.

Or in the still more attenuated, skeletonized verse of Kurt Liebmann:

Thy hair fluffs smiles
breath velvet
Thou
Kisest at longings silver-threads
claw-stark plaint
to waving light
and
curling
circling
bluest
sigh.

It was Blümner's ambition to compose words or sounds, vowels or consonants, as a painter uses colours or a composer tones. As the fruit of his theories we have "Ango Laina," an absolute poem, in two voices. The poem is written not for the eye, but rather for the ear, the inner ear. Rendered to the outer ear with all the countless gradations of Blümner's sonorous voice, this absolute poem takes on a tremendous volume, and palpitates with a strange power, music, and inner meaning. You are to read the words or concretions of letters as you would read notes. Even at the risk of disrupting the continuity, I shall quote only a few staves:

Oiai laéla oia ssialu
Ensúdio trésa súdio mischnumi
Ia lon stuáz
Brorr schjatt
Oíázo tsuigulu
Ua sésa masuó túlú
Ua sésa maschiató toró
Oi séngu gádse andola
Oi ándo séngu
Séngu ándola
Oi séngu
Gádse
Ina
Leiola
Kbaó
Sagór
Kadó

Kadó mai tiúsi
Suijo angola

Schu mai sitá ka lio séngu

Ia péndo ála
Péndu siolo

Toró toró
Mengádse gádse se

The cadences fall in a hissing, clattering, rolling liquid stream, then flow in a rhythmic buoyancy. A certain form is audible, a refrain leaps forth again and again. But to the unexpressionistic human ear it might be Hungarian, or Lettish, Esperanto, Ido—or idiocy.

In this attempt to make poetry a pure abstraction, to lop from its burning quatrefoil of sound, sense, colour, and form, all leaves except sound, Blümner believes that he has given it an ethereal freedom, liberated it from the earthen investiture of elements too material or too human. He believes that he has found a vehicle for the expression of the immediate, direct, spontaneous language of the emotions, without the mediation of meaning or the background of association. He has, perhaps, builded better than he knew, but he has builded in a circle—backward and downward. For there where formal, conscious art leaves off, the borders of the primitive begin. The anarchs are at us from every side. We brush against all the aboriginal spectres that mow behind the mysteries of speech, the dark and lurking half-bestial, half-devilish ancestors of words, crawling out of the instincts, out of inarticulate sounds, until they take wings and soar into the speech of Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe.

In other words, Blümner has reduced an art to a natural function; for until his absolute, abstract poetry be subjected, like music, to definite laws, it is little more than Nature. Who amongst us with thrilling vocal chords and emotions taut as bow-strings in our youth, our boyhood or childhood, has not yielded to the natural captivation of sound as a vent for emotion, and chanted such abstract poetry, coining a thousand new words and sounds, speaking a tongue never heard on land or sea, yet nevertheless a natural, human, universal tongue, dictated by the mysterious trinity and affinity between the ear, the heart and the tongue?

In Rudolf Blümner's absolute poetry we are, therefore, still bound to the hints and significances of sound, if not of words—words that burst rocket-like into a luminous spray of a thousand associations. There is scarcely one of these artificial words that can not be given its onomatopoeic colour or meaning. What does *ango* suggest?—what

laina?—what *toró*? The syllables stir the pools of memory or association, even to those who are confined to the pool of a single language—they stir even the language-puddles of the uncultured with their vocabularies of 500 well-worn words. And why should most of these arbitrary words of Blümner's end mellifluously with vowels, if not because of the traditional music of Italianate vocables?

Thus, every poem in an unknown, exotic language would be absolute poetry to us. Perhaps it is, perhaps it *must* be, by virtue of that mystic force that operates beyond the word and seeks its throne in sound, pulsating from race to race. Both tongue and ear are for ever teaching each other or being taught. The plastic, impregnated air about us forms our speech; the newspapers in which we root and wallow deform it. The native soil rumbles and declaims underfoot as at Elsinore or Delphos; and the trembling grains in the tympani of our hearts and brains respond. Ears that have not lost this mystic communion with the mother soil are able to hear coming events cast their echoes before, as one may hear the thunder of the far-off train already murmuring in the rail. Artificial languages that reek of the lamp instead of the soil can take no real root—Volapük, Esperanto, Ido.

But can poetry find a universal form or speech—like music or colour? Rudolf Blümner of the "Sturm" declares that he has found it; but has he not rather lost poetry and found merely another form of music? He has closed the doors and shuttered the windows, and left us in the dark with a barbarian chanting in a strange, melodious tongue—incomprehensible to us. We demand sense from speech, if not from sound.

The discoverer or inventor of absolute poetry utters a warning to those who would lightly or wantonly imitate without having before them the great rounded form or feeling in themselves—the plastic, dædalian rhythm. But we need not fear that an impressionistic world will suddenly plunge itself into the Nirvana of absolute, expressionistic poetry. We shall content ourselves with relative poetry and its cumbrous baggage-train of words packed with meanings. But when the impulse is upon us to make a primitive, spontaneous oral music, in which we are at once composer, instrument, theme and conductor, then we may abandon ourselves to some such spontaneous composition, unbridled by anything save the ear. The beauty of sound remains independent of meaning—as when we hear a rich voice singing, but not the words sung; or when the nightingale attacks our hearts at night.

Blümner's theory is highly subjective but it is also rooted in instinct and nature, and so it can not be dismissed as mere nonsense. It may even develop itself into an art—akin to the dance. But sense is the body of poetry, and we do not wish to disembody it into mere sound any more than we wish to disembody the flower into mere perfume. I am, etc.,
 Berlin, Germany. HERMAN GEORGE SCHEFFAUER.

MISCELLANY.

IN England and on the Continent one of the pleasures of going to the country for a week-end or for a walking-trip is the knowledge that wherever he may choose to go the traveller will find an unpretentious but acceptable haven for food and shelter. Wholesome nourishment and clean white sheets are always available in cottage, farm or inn, to persons of even the smallest means. The pedestrian with his knapsack stopping for a bed and a meal is a common sight in every village of Europe; he may be stared at even as yokels in this country stare at strangers, but he is not regarded as a freak. His request for lodging and refreshment is looked upon as a normal event in the day's life, and opportunities to satisfy his wants lie everywhere at hand. After all, the needs of the earnest seeker after refreshment from the city's dust and toil are simple enough: home-made jam, butter, cheese and milk from the farm, a bedroom devised for sleep and not for show—these are the things the weary city-dweller dreams of and hopes to find. In a word, in European countries the crea-

ture comforts that are so necessary to the enjoyment of a country walk are not raised above their proper plane; they are there to serve men, not to enslave them.

How is it with us? Alas, the gasoline standard has distorted all our values. The automobile is an excellent servant but a vile master; it makes a first-rate means of travel but an absurd ideal of life. But let us not blame only the automobile for the grotesque conception of pleasure which is now current amongst us. The automobile is a manifestation rather than a cause, but it symbolizes so completely the aspirations of our philistine generation that we may, without injustice, load many of our social incongruities upon it and blame it for the general acceptance of the gasoline standard of living. There was a time when it might have been said that the country was made for man, but to-day everything in town and country alike is adapted to and subverted by the speeder. The dust and stench are all that remain for the simple person who chooses to walk along the highway for pleasure. Imagine Wordsworth in Westchester County on a Sunday afternoon or wandering in the environs of any of our big cities! Assuming that he did not take to the hills—and run the risk of trespassing—he would spend all his time wending his perilous way among the speeding automobiles until fatigue prompted the search for bread and shelter. Then he would hope that a neat cottage might appear in sight and an honest farmer offer welcome. Perhaps, he thinks to himself, the farmer's wife will serve some cold meat, fresh lettuce from the garden, rich milk, bread, butter and berries. Then, after a pleasant talk with his host, he will lie down between sweet-smelling sheets and sleep in peace. In the morning he will pay his host's reckoning, a modest amount yet sufficient to profit the seller, and go on his way rejoicing.

ALAS, poor Wordsworth! Such delights are not for you in these days and in this land. Rather you will tramp along until you come to a pretentious roadhouse set in a broad rim of expensive motor-cars, where the flunkies will regard you with high disapproval, because it is apparent that you do not want to have your holiday coined in their metal. Here you will find parties over-eating the same sort of dinner that they consumed at the Great Babylon yesterday; interrupting their meal to "toddle" between courses to the distressing barking of a jazz band fresh from the city. Of course, if our unhappy poet is thirsty for a glass of milk, and hungry for a biscuit or a piece of pie, he can procure those delicacies at these gasoline hostleries, but he will be charged the price of at least half a dozen sonnets, for the cost of eating in one of our modern restaurants, whether in town or country, is based on the perpetuation of a wholly artificial institution rather than on an honest exchange of goods.

But if our Wordsworth, driven away from the inn of conspicuous waste by the contempt of the haughty hat-boys, takes to the road again, shall he starve? By no means. A few hundred yards away he will probably discover the dainty Harebell Tea Room. Outside hangs a neatly painted board with a harebell and a capital T upon it. Here he finds a bookish lady who is employing her time "quaintly," by condescending to provide tea and cakes for the passer-by. She has been "written up" in the local newspaper and the tea-room is considered to be a gathering place for the *illuminati* of the neighbourhood. Yes, Mr. Wordsworth can get a simple meal here consisting of some indifferent tea and a sandwich or two of very thin bread that apologetically hides a leaf of lettuce smeared with mayonnaise, and perhaps a genteel section of Lady Baltimore cake is thrown in for good measure. This glorious fare is likely to cost him much more than it's worth, but worse than that, any enjoyment that he might have had will be spoiled by the palpable insincerity of the place. I honestly believe that a simple beanery in Chicago or Kansas City is greater in the sight of God than these dim, "arty" tea-rooms which flourish amongst us merely because we have slipped our moorings in the small matter of being happy.

I HEAR on the best authority that Mr. Antonio Scotti has signed a new three-year contract with the Metropolitan, which I think makes the record for service there, since Mr. Scotti has already sung at the Metropolitan for twenty-two seasons. Mr. Scotti has many gifts and abilities, but he is pre-eminently a singer, a great singer, a master of the art of singing. The main elements which go to the making of this mastery are four: great intelligence (*Intelligenz*, in the current sense of the German word, and the proper primary sense of the English equivalent), great emotional power, great natural nobility or high character, and finally, some sort of voice, not necessarily a great voice or even a very good one, not necessarily one one-hundredth part as good as that which the *Padre Eterno* so handsomely gave to Mr. Scotti. A failure in any one of these elements brings an artist below the mark of his high calling; a failure in hard work, which is the medium through which they are fused into harmonious perfection, brings him below it. Mr. Scotti had all these elements to work with, and he has had the diligence to balance and blend them into the perfection of a great art.

As far as the Metropolitan is concerned, it looks as if, at the end of his quarter-century of service, Mr. Scotti might be the last of his race. Great voices there undoubtedly will be; our passion for them being so excessive, and great voices being by no means hard to find, we shall no doubt be gratified by them continuously. No doubt, too, we shall be well favoured by artists of high emotional power. But shall we hear again the great singer, shall we again be enraptured and ennobled by that perfect combination and harmonious balance of the four essential elements—great intelligence, great emotional power, great natural nobility and an adequate physical organ? I do not like to pose as the *laudator temporis acti*, but I can not help recalling the cast of the last "Don Giovanni" I heard, now nearly a dozen years ago. It was Eames, Sembrich, Gadski, Bonci, Scotti and Chaliapin. Four great singers out of six!—and the other two not missing it by more than the thickness of a sheet of cigarette-paper!

JOURNEYMAN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

A DEFINITION OF DEMOCRACY.

SIRS: You accuse me in your Vol. IV, No. 79, of having formulated no definition of democracy. The charge is grievously false. I formulated and printed a definition years ago. Democracy is the theory that the booboisie knows what it wants, and deserves to get it good and hard. I am, etc.,

H. L. MENCKEN.

Hohenzollern, Maryland.

THE POLICY OF THE WOMEN'S PEACE SOCIETY.

SIRS: Having read your frequent lamentations on the ignorance and sentimentality of pacifists, I wonder whether it is possible that all pacifists seem alike to you. If you had ever tried to organize them, or work with them, you would, I think, have found them to be as diverse as the militarists, who are notoriously in disagreement as to why they fought the last war, and why they must now prepare for the next one.

Being, myself, one hundred-per-cent pacifist, I confess that I am disgusted with the many women who say: "My dear, I am just as much a pacifist as you are, but of course when war comes, one must help." I weep with the *Freeman* over those trusting souls who feel that wars can be prevented either by developing friendship between the peoples of different nations or by organizing world-courts and leagues of nations; and I find it difficult to hold to my non-resistant principles when I am told: "If only you radicals would stop breeding discontentment by talking economics, we could have peace in the world. It is we who are the real peacemakers; you are just the trouble-makers."

But all pacifists are not like this. I know many who are as fully informed on economics as the *Freeman* itself; men and women who gave up their jobs, their social position, even sacrificed their family ties, rather than have part or lot in the business of killing. I am proud to say that I know a few of the many pacifists who went to jail because they knew

of and spoke of some of the connexions between economic facts and war. Do you not, then, think it is only just to distinguish between such proved pacifists as these and the liberals who were misled by Mr. Wilson, who will probably be misled again by anyone who makes them fair promises?

Perhaps, however, in your disparaging references you have had in mind the so-called pacifist organizations, rather than individual pacifists. There again, there is a right-wing and a left-wing opinion, the wings being even farther apart than those of the labour and radical movements. For example, the Women's Peace Society to which I belong is a non-resistant organization, whose members pledge themselves not to support any war, offensive or defensive, international or civil. Its immediate programme is complete disarmament; absolute freedom of trade and trade-opportunities, the world over. It does not matter to this organization whether women first decide that they want disarmament, and then learn why, under existing economic conditions, they can't get it; or whether they see the iniquity of monopoly-ownership, economic imperialism, etc., and then decide that such conditions could not exist without a military system to maintain and protect them. The result is that the Women's Peace Society is made up of women who say: Killing is wrong; exploitation is wrong; we are going to stop both. Now, is it fair to brand as wholly ignorant and sentimental an organization which has progressed even as far as that?

Last month there was a conference at Niagara Falls, Ontario, called by the Women's Peace Society at the suggestion of a number of Canadian women who desired to federate the absolute pacifists of America from pole to pole. The economic point of view which the *Freeman* so frequently expresses—almost as though it was the discoverer thereof—was the starting-point of the discussions at this conference. A new organization, called the Women's Peace Union of the Western Hemisphere, was formed, not because the women present at the conference were ignorant of economics but because they were convinced that, although changes in economic conditions are essential to peace, they will not in themselves develop the non-resistant spirit or lead to a respect for human life under all circumstances. In other words, these women distinguished between a means to the end, and what seemed to them the end itself. If they had believed that the right attitude of mind could be developed by economic changes alone, they would not of course have organized a new peace group; they would have been satisfied to work only with existing organizations.

However, the point is this: If you hear that the Women's Peace Union is demanding complete disarmament of President Harding's arms-conference, do not denounce us as hopelessly naïve and trusting. Years ago, when we were all suffragists, we learned that, if the poor wish to agitate, they must find out how to make their agitation "news," the easiest way being to connect it with something that is "news"; and the arms-conference at Washington is news, even though it be more concerned with arms than it is with disarming. I am, etc.,

ELINOR BYRNS.

New York City.

WELL, take the programme of the Women's Peace Society, for example, since that is the one in which our correspondent is immediately interested. Is it fair to ask what "complete disarmament; absolute freedom of trade and trade-opportunities, the world over," can possibly amount to without the correlative of absolute freedom of production? Those who "are as fully informed on economics as the *Freeman* itself" will have no trouble about answering that question; and the answer is an exceedingly important one to the pacifist, because it exactly marks the difference between usefulness and uselessness. If this question—which we deal with at some length on page fifty-four of this issue of the *Freeman*—has been answered, however, or even raised, by our pacifist friends, we have not heard of it.—EDITORS.

THE LATEST VERBOTEN.

SIRS: Yesterday at the Post Office I heard the latest *Verboten*. Henceforth it is "against the law" to send money in a registered letter! So now, in this Land of the Free, one can no longer do what one chooses even within one's own envelopes—not to mention one's own four walls.

No doubt this new law favours the use of post-office money-orders. Express money-orders, and banks—so that now these three will not lose a chance to take their toll off every dollar that is sent abroad. And well they know how to take it. A friend of mine sent a money-order to a correspondent in Vienna last June. For ten dollars they allowed her 7000 crowns—at a time when the exchange was about 700 crowns for one dollar. I enclose the receipt—it's an interesting document—as showing what robbery is allowed in this country, where so many innocent things are *verboden*. I am, etc.,
Yonkers, New York.

HELEN WOLJESKA.

WHY GOD LOVES THE IRISH.

SIRS: I want to tell you that your editorials about Ireland lately have been as true in observation and fact as they are delightful to read. Ireland, as you well say, is meeting with Mr. Worldly Wiseman. Heaven send that Ireland deals with the plausible rascal the way Christian did in Bunyan's glorious dream.

In confirmation of your views as to the essentially religious mind of the Irish people, I am tempted to relate for your edification a pleasant story that came my way recently. A certain old Irish peasant woman who was endeavouring to make a living by keeping poultry was complaining to the inspector from the Agricultural Department of the failure of her hens to lay in the winter time. "Give the birds some red pepper, ma'am," said the Inspector. "Ah, no! Sir, I wouldn't think of doing the likes of that," cried the old woman, "I'd never strive to come between God Almighty and my hens." I am, etc.,
Chicago, Illinois.

BERTRAM DUFFY.

THE GREAT DISILLUSION.

SIRS: I am indebted to a good English friend for occasional copies of English newspapers. In a recent issue of the London *Observer*, I came across a passage in one of Mr. Garvin's characteristic editorials which I think deserves quotation in the columns of the admirable *Freeman*.

Throughout the world there has been unexampled disillusionment. The ruins of former things stand broken and stark on every hand. The disappointment of hopes, social and international, is immeasurable. We all feel this and its consequence. We feel them in the spirit and the flesh. Taxation is a spur where conscience fails. But we must bend our minds the more to remedies, not regrets. If we are to devise and apply the right remedies, we must attribute the universal malady of the peace to the right causes. *We must shun like death the creeping paralysis of the thought that the war itself was not worth while.*

I have marked the concluding sentence in italics for the sake of emphasis, for here is a significant confession—"The war itself was not worth while." You, sirs, with your devastating series of articles on "The Myth of a Guilty Nation" are completing the indictment of our rulers. Gradually even the most complacent of us in every country on both sides of the line are beginning to see the light. I am, etc.,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

JASPER MERRIAM.

THE THEATRE.

THE RETURN OF THE IRISH PLAYERS.

THE previous experiences of the Irish Players in this country are now a curious chapter of dramatic history, and make an illuminating commentary upon the transplanted compatriots of the players and playwrights who have brought fame to their country, in some degree. However, the benign laws of progress are reputed to be at work even in the commercial theatre, and the Lord, moving in his customary mysterious ways, has performed the wonder of a return visit, after nine years' absence, of the Irish Players. At Henry Miller's Theatre last week, they produced Mr. Lennox Robinson's comedy, "The Whiteheaded Boy," which enjoys the advantage of arriving here under the protective covering of a great London success.

Doubtless in order to create an appropriate atmosphere, the management had thoughtfully arranged for the emission of what are called, I believe, "Irish Airs," by a tinkling piano which at once transported me to those happy days when "five reels for five cents" satisfied the Spartan simplicity of the pre-war movie-fan. I confess, however, that without the clue of American respect for the obvious, I should have had some difficulty in understanding why a modern Irish play should be associated with those tunes beloved of English regimental bands when His Majesty King George V celebrates the wearing of the green. But, once the curtain rose, one forgot all the tin-pot Irishism which is the last refuge of politicians.

Mr. Robinson's play is the skilful presentation of a genuine human comedy, which is as free from the stale devices of Sardoodledum as it is rich in effective dramatic situations. In brief

outline, its theme is this: Denis Geohegan is the spoiled darling of his mother, who has sacrificed the whole family so that he may be a gentleman and study for a profession in Dublin. But this white-headed boy is not a success; he has failed for the third time to pass his qualifying examination as a doctor, and the family is in revolt. It is decided that he must be exported to Canada, and to conceal the disgrace of such an admission of failure, his aunt invents the story that he is going to take up a fine situation with an imaginary wealthy relative. The legend at once takes root and involves complications with the father of the girl whom Denis Geohegan was to marry. John Duffy is a hard-headed man who knows how to deal with white-headed boys. This departure for Canada without his daughter Delia, is an insult, a clear proof that the Geohegans think the Duffys unworthy of an alliance. He insists that the young people shall marry, or that the family shall pay him substantial damages for breach of promise.

The greatest fun then arises out of the desperate efforts of the Geohegan household to convince John Duffy that the spoilt darling, the great hope of the family, is a failure, a commonplace youth who will never amount to anything. Bribes are accepted from various negotiators, each of whom places Duffy under the pledge of secrecy, and it seems at last as if Denis can be shipped off to Canada, and the money he has been wasting will be available to help his brothers and sisters. But all these people have reckoned without this prodigal son, who has no illusions as to his own superiority, and has no hesitation in accusing his family of having sacrificed him to their vanity. He had no wish to be a doctor, and now that they have threatened him with exile, he asserts himself to the point of marrying his Delia and getting a job as a labourer.

This catastrophe is the worst, for not only does it deprive John Duffy of the money he received as bribes to drop the case for breach of promise, but it involves the two families in the disgrace of having Denis living in a workman's cottage as a common navvy, thereby giving the lie to his legendary superiority. They consequently find him a job, present him with the money paid to his father-in-law, and assure him that he need never do a stroke of work, for his efficient little wife will discharge the duties of his appointment as manager of a new co-operative store. Thus, in the last analysis, Denis Geohegan remains the spoilt child and the idle gentleman of his mother's ambition, while everybody else is sacrificed for his well-being.

The element which gives its fine quality to this comedy is the absolute naturalness of the dialogue, and the situations which follow one another with the simplicity of life itself. There is not a stagey moment in it, nor a line that is forced or theatrical. The "curtains" are heartbreakingly undramatic, from the orthodox point of view, but the whole play moves forward, irresistible in its cumulative effect, and with the constant motive of real social satire always present, but never obtrusive. As always with the best Irish plays, there is an intimate identification between the dramatist's characters and the players. The latter are so thoroughly and so inevitably the types of the play that one can not conceive of its being interpreted by foreigners unfamiliar with the prototypes. That, indeed, is the essence of the whole question of Irish plays in America. These are foreign plays, and when not produced by Irish actors, knowing the idiom and the lives of the people portrayed, they can not be adequately rendered.

The Players themselves, I need hardly say, have not lost the tradition of good acting which has always marked their performances. Like the theatres of Con-

tinental Europe, the Abbey Theatre has always understood the importance of the cast as a whole, and has not adopted the Anglo-American theory that a "star" in an important part will cover a multitude of sins. Miss Maire O'Neill was superb in the rôle of Aunt Allen, and her grotesque courtship of John Duffy played by Mr. Arthur Sinclair, and the negotiations between these two, reached a high level of pure comedy. Each part was so well cast that I am tempted to mention them all: Mr. Arthur Shields, who simply *was* the Irish country youth, with an urban veneer; Miss Maureen Delany, as the adoring mother, had all the maudlin sentiment combined with ruthlessness which that study in selfishness demanded; Mr. Sydney Morgan as the George Geoghan upon whom all the financial burdens fell, and Miss Gertrude Murphy, who looked so charmingly real and unspoiled as Delia—well, all I can say is that I hope the people here who produce Irish plays and try to act such parts, will stop, look in and listen at the Henry Miller Theatre while "The Whiteheaded Boy" is there.

ERNEST BOYD.

BOOKS.

MR. TARKINGTON AND THE CRITICS.

JUDGING by recent novels America to-day presents the spectacle of a country whose emotions, after generations of struggle with purely practical and material things, are dried up. Nothing could be more emotionally jejune than the recent crop of American novels—unless, indeed, it be the recent plays or the recent moving pictures. Almost the only passions that one gets a clear impression of are either resentment or lasciviousness—the resentment of people suffering from indigestion, or the lasciviousness of the sedentary man. These new American novels nearly always deal with the West or Middle West, and the life described takes place to such an extent in the environment of bedroom, kitchen and bath that this new style of fiction might be fitly described as the triangle-novel. But instead of providing us with a history or development of some emotion or idea, like the French triangle-plays, the American novel demonstrates only futile and trivial phases of life. The origins of this school of fiction can easily be traced: they are from the writings of the ingenious lady who invented the tale of the tribulations of Helen and Warren for the delectation of the readers of an afternoon paper.

One sometimes has a far-reaching idea or an overwhelming emotion whilst watching the roast burn, or whilst scrubbing one's teeth, or whilst sending one's trousers to the cleaner, but the new novel is interested in nothing except the charcoal of the meat, or the smell of the tooth-paste, or the shapelessness of the trousers. All the novels of this school are cleverly written, notably those of Mrs. Evelyn Scott and Mr. C. Kay Scott, and a couple of the best-sellers, but all are tedious and far more of a menace to literature than is the work of Mr. Robert Chambers or Mr. Zane Grey, for the truth is that the popular writer has more relation to the great artist than the clever writer has. The clever writer exhausts the soil; the great artist fertilizes it. The West and Middle West are now being exploited to such an extent by writers with a merely intellectual conception of good writing, that as a field for the artist that territory threatens to become barren soil, made bare and unproductive to readers and writers alike. A great artist could give a life out of his own spirit to the West as Thomas Hardy has given one to Wessex, or as John Synge has given one to the Aran Islands. The vast emotion that Synge has poured into one, the tragical imagination that Hardy has flashed upon the other, has given these places an existence that nothing nor no one can take from, or make

threadbare or commonplace. Unless the forthcoming autumn novels, which, one can safely hazard, will deal almost entirely with the West, bring forward a writer who can endow the region with some strong emotional and imaginative life, the map of the West, as a field for literary exploration, can be rolled up for some time to come.

The two great discouragements which in this country face the novelist who may be an artist, are the low taste in fiction which is encouraged by even the more expensive magazine, and the almost complete absence of a genuine and sincere criticism of novels. Such criticism of poetry we have in abundance, because it is largely written by men who are poets themselves, to whom sincerity, in addition to being a gift from the gods, is a first law of living. Criticism of novels is commonly written by men and women who are obliged to race through a number of books per week, who never have time to read any of them thoroughly, or to appreciate finesse of conception or construction. Indeed criticism is rarely the objective of these critics, for their obligation primarily is to provide an entertaining article.

It is a most enlightening experience to go over the criticisms that have greeted Mr. Booth Tarkington's "Alice Adams"—a skilfully conceived, competently written book, but not an important one nor even one that will repay serious attention. Totally unlike the delightfully whimsical books which have made this writer so beloved, "Alice Adams" is written according to the current formula in realism. The heroine who gives her name to the book is the daughter of a clerk in a small town in the West, who endeavours to effect the conquest of local society without possessing the money or the "background" necessary for such an achievement. She cultivates her smiles and airs and graces in the looking-glass. In a Mid-Victorian sort of way she endeavours to annex the catch of the town, whom she entices to her front porch. She lies cleverly but not too seriously. She does her best to be a sort of adventuress. But she never does anything with that amount of seriousness or conviction in her own or in her author's mind which gives the people in a book the lineaments of human beings. She is merely a projection of the author's brain, and about her fate, which is commonplace, and far from being tragical, we can experience no emotion. Her failure to capture a husband who would enthrone her socially coincides with her father's failure with his glue-factory, and we leave her at the last page about to take a course in a business college. A readable book by a skilful writer, with some brilliantly done pages, such as those descriptive of the party at Mildred Palmer's, but even that is spoiled by one of those coincidences for which the author, in this book, has an absolute mania.

Now let us consider what those critics in whose hands lie the making of literary reputations have to say about "Alice Adams." Professor Robert Morss Lovett in the *New Republic* writes:

We know that she is predestined, and there is a fascination in watching the progress of her doom. . . . It is a story as grim in its assembling of human forces, as implacable in tracing the resultant of them as 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles,' and as in 'Tess,' we feel that Alice is the victim of a conspiracy. . . . Alice has incontestable reality.

Now, if this is not melodrama in criticism, what is it? For far from there being an "assembling of human forces" there is chiefly an assembling of coincidences, and Alice is the victim of nothing so much as of the fact that her author was passing through a period barren of emotion and of his usual whimsical imaginativeness, a state probably brought on by a fairly long life spent in the making of books. Again, Professor Seidel Canby in the *Literary Review* says:

She is the lost youth of the wonderful mother in 'The Way of All Flesh,' Samuel Butler's masterpiece of characterization.

Now, is it fair to ask what conceivably can these two distinguished editors and critics mean?—what in particular can Mr. Lovett mean? For although one might, as it were in a glass darkly, follow a comparison between

¹ "Alice Adams." Booth Tarkington. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

Alice Adams and Becky Sharp, lamentable as it might be, I defy any reader to find any excuse whatever for dragging in "The Way of All Flesh," or Thomas Hardy's masterpiece, with its great tragic character Tess. Take, for example, Mr. Booth Tarkington's ending, where Alice arrives at the business college:

Well, she was here at last. She looked up and down the street quickly, and then with a little heave of the shoulders she went bravely in, under the sign and began to climb the wooden steps. Half-way up the shadows were heaviest, but after that the place began to seem brighter. There was an open window overhead somewhere, she found, and the steps at the top were gay with sunshine.

Compare the Pollyanna-like optimism of this ending with the ending of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles,"—after Tess is hanged:

'Justice' was done, and the President of the Immortals (in Æschylean phrase) had ended his sport with Tess. And the D'Urberville knights and dames slept on in their tombs unknowing. The two speechless gazers bent themselves down to earth as if in prayer, and remained thus for a long time, absolutely motionless: the flag continued to wave silently. As soon as they had strength they rose, joined hands again, and went on.

Between the two men and their books, which Mr. Lovett compares, there is all the heights up to heaven and the depths down to hell. "Hope is a slave, despair is a free man," says the Arabian proverb. Let us leave Thomas Hardy his despair—that virile pessimism, without some touch of which no man can be an artist at all.

Can it be that Mr. Canby and Mr. Lovett have a sort of Jack-Horner-pie bag in which they keep a collection of slips with the names of great creations from which they can easily and at random draw one, when they feel in need of a literary comparison? This is the only explanation; for certainly, normally, a comprehension of literary relativity must be assumed in these two distinguished professors.

Let us proceed to the *Atlantic Monthly* wherein Mr. T. S. Fitzpatrick delivers himself as follows:

If the reader of 'Alice Adams' is a woman, she lays down the book with two thoughts occupying her mind: first, that it isn't fair for any man to comprehend the workings of a girl's mind so clearly; and second, that here a life of pitiful tragedy is averted at last only by a girl's pluck and willingness to face reality. . . . Here Mr. Tarkington shows a comprehension of girl-nature that is disconcerting, to say the least.

This may sound merely banal, but it is none the less baneful to literature when published in an influential magazine like the *Atlantic Monthly*. Of all the reviews given currency by the publisher it is fair to say that in one at least there is the note of genuine criticism. This outstanding review is by Mr. Harry Hanson in the *Chicago Daily News*, which, extravagantly flattering as it is, does certainly draw attention to the one real character in the book—that of Virgil Adams, the father—that common, but unnoted figure in American life, the elderly clerk. This portrait of Virgil Adams makes one wonder if Mr. Tarkington might not have written a real book if he had but abandoned the daughter and devoted himself to the father.

When critics criticize in the manner indicated above, what hope is there for our finding comprehension amongst them if any of the young men and women who are now writing fiction should produce a masterpiece? The novel is a very important form of literature—from some points of view perhaps the most important, because the most widely-felt of all æsthetic delights is the delight in a story. Yet in this country the novelist who is an artist is really in a worse position than any other artist, for both the reviewers and the magazines conspire to deprive him of appreciation. Amongst the magazines, however, the *Dial* ought to be excepted: compare, for example, the serial in the current issue of the *Dial* where Mr. Sherwood Anderson puts real emotion and imaginative life into his slowly unwinding story and characters, with the pseudo-poetic, pseudo-imaginative, pseudo-Celtic, pseudo-Synge piece of serial writing which is now appearing in the

Century Magazine, which the editors of that publication naïvely or perhaps cynically advertise as a work of scholarship, on account one may suppose of the Church Latin quotations. It would seem as if in this country both magazine-editors and critics were in a conspiracy to undermine the intelligence of their readers.

MARY M. COLUM.

PASSAGE TO INDIA.

WHEN *Orbis Terrarum* was the little peninsula of Europe, what a compact and comprehensible unit the "world" was! The inhabitants of the rest of the planet might manufacture delicate porcelain and gorgeous silken shawls and do fine things with gold and silver—but outside of this they were not to be reckoned with. In these modern days, however, all the lucidities and certainties of that remote sphere have vanished, and the *orbis terrarum* of our time is as startling as a crazy-quilt in its incongruous juxtapositions. India, for example, an Ancient of Days among the civilizations of the world, is perhaps more intimately a part of the English-speaking community, at least with respect to its literature, than were these United States in the days of their colonial dependency; and India itself is to-day the scene of a spiritual struggle akin to that which went on in Russia in the early nineteenth century; a struggle much fiercer, and far more significant than anything we are wont to occupy ourselves with in America. In the books that are now coming out of India, the old and the new, the Asiatic and European seem perpetually to lock horns. In Mr. Rabindranath Tagore's two latest volumes,¹ one is struck as much by the similarities between Eastern and Western thought, as by the cleaving differences which make the life of Bengal as portrayed in Mr. Tagore's "The Wreck" seem to an Occidental as remote and incredible as the Arabian Nights itself.

What is going to come out of India during the next generation? From the material evidence that one gathers in "The Wreck" it would seem that we may look for a literature as exhaustive and as powerful as the "Brothers Karamazov." At any rate, the rich soil of such a literature is evidently present; only the seed of literary genius is lacking.

The mingling of East and West, which is going on steadily all the time, is a spiritually explosive mixture: India to-day is in revolt not merely against the political world of Seeley and Kipling; it is also, and perhaps more bellicosely (if more unconsciously) in revolt against the moral and social world of George Meredith—against the gross refinements, the mincing obscenities of the European. The great Indian novel will be measured by Himalayan standards when once the spiritual significance of this struggle is experienced and measured and expressed. From this point of view, "The Wreck" is something of a literary disaster precisely for the reason that it floats so calmly on the waters of romantic interest; its characters live in a world of time but not in a world of vital experience; at the end of the tale their faces have the stolid smile or frown which the author painted there in the beginning. But the time can not be far distant when a novel will come out of India that will give us the picture of a wreck which will sink into deep waters and perhaps touch the very bottom of life; and if this happens long before the American novel has passed out of its stage of experimental realism, it should surprise no one.

A hint of what the Indian novel of the future may be capable is given in the little collection of sketches called "Glimpses of Bengal": extracts from letters which Mr. Tagore wrote to his friends when he was a young and little-known writer. Like his fellow-countrymen, Messrs. Gandhi and Jagadis Bose, Mr. Tagore has achieved a high mental stature through the assimilation of what is best in both the Eastern and Western disciplines, and

¹"The Wreck: A Hindu Romance." Rabindranath Tagore. New York: The Macmillan Company.

"Glimpses of Bengal." Selected from the Letters of Rabindranath Tagore. 1885 to 1895. New York: The Macmillan Company.

he has done this to an extent which few Western writers, with such exceptions as "Æ," have approached. In "Glimpses of Bengal" the landscape, the characters, and the experiences are Indian, but the accent is universal, and the thoughts that came to this young Bengali as he idled and mused and shared his reflections with his friends, in that grand solitude out of which philosophy arises like a lonely eagle from a mountain top, are phrased in a language common to all humane minds. In these pages one finds profound observations that reflect the world without and the world within, like the benign waters of a mountain lake which shows at the same time the debris of green life at its bottom, and on its surface the trees that hedge the shore, and above them the sky. There is a pleasure in reading these sketches which is quite incommensurate with their somewhat humble pretences; one feels that Mr. Tagore's snapshots compare with the totality of his mind, as Rembrandt's etchings compare with his oil-paintings; and there are those who may find a richer meaning in the more restricted medium. "The Wreck" is an approach to that strange exterior of alien customs and manners that belong to the mind of India or at least to the mind of Bengal; the "Glimpses of Bengal" start a fugitive trail into the very depths of that mind; when these two paths are combined in a single work the literary pilgrim from the Western world will be able to make passage to India indeed.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

POET AND TRANSLATOR.

AMONG the poets of the present day in England, Mr. Richard Aldington holds a place apart. Where these English poets are, for the most part, spontaneously prolific as regards the impulses which induce them to write, and extremely limited as regards the degree of intelligence which they are able to apply to their writing, Mr. Aldington is a poet who has applied himself seriously to the study of his craft, but whose initial impulse to write at all is probably, in the outcome, only a small one. There is scarcely a poem of his which does not reveal, by some happy and dexterous turn of phrase, the literary craftsman; there is scarcely one that may be called, in all its component parts, an outstanding and unforgettable achievement. Mr. Aldington's position in regard to his generation in this rather resembles that of Campion's position in regard to the Elizabethans; there are not a few English poets of the present day who have not at times, by happy accident, produced, say, a lyric which conveys a more immediate and complete sense of something strongly felt and imagined than anything, almost, of his; but at the same time, his work, taken in bulk, stands upon a higher general level than theirs. Behind it, one feels the pressure of a scholarly, thoughtful, tempered mind; a mind capable of appreciating Heine or Catullus, Dante or Henri de Régnier; a mind equipped with a wide outlook upon the general landscape of European culture; and it is precisely in possessing this outlook that Mr. Aldington is so startlingly distinct from his English contemporaries.

The features that give to his original poetry its virtues and its defects are even more apparent in his work as a translator. In this rôle, Mr. Aldington is, I think, supreme among his contemporaries; he is the ideal translator. He is apparently incapable of translating work with which he feels no sympathy; and he is equally incapable of the paraphrase, the addition of verbal embroidery, and all the other methods of adaptation with which English translators have made us so familiar. Being, as he is, a scholar-poet primarily, his work as a translator is that of a man who knows how to hold the balance carefully between scholarship and poetry. Such a translator falls very seldom into the pitfalls either of carelessness or of frigidity.

"Medallions in Clay" is interesting not only as revealing Mr. Aldington's skill, but as showing the direction in which his tastes naturally move. It is apparent that the

poetry in which he takes most delight is the somewhat artificial and sophisticated work which flourished in Greece during the Alexandrian revival. Of the poems contained in this volume, three-fourths may be said to be of this type. The work of Anyte finds Mr. Aldington at his worst, that of Meleager and the pseudo-Anacreon at his best. In the remainder of the book, he is occupied with a little-known field, that of the Latin poets of the Renaissance, and here he has surpassed himself—as much in the selection of the passages to be translated as in the work of translation itself. Such poems as Navagero's "Returning from His Embassy in Spain," "To the Winds," and "Inscription for a Fountain"; as Flaminio's "Fête Galante"; and as Pontano's epitaph for his little daughter:

You leave your father in darkness, my Lucia; from light to darkness, little daughter, you are taken.

But yet you are not taken into darkness; you leave darkness behind you and you shine in the sun.

I see you, little daughter, in the heavens. Do you see me? Or do I comfort myself with foolish pretences?

Only this grave of yours I touch, little daughter; no life is left in this poor dust.

Yet if your soul still lives we should think you happy, for you died young.

And we drag out our life through light and darkness. Was it for this alone, little daughter, you were born?

—such poems as these, and the superb epitaphs of Politian, not to mention the noble and moving lines to Rome placed at the end, are indeed a feast of good things. Writers as diverse as Pater and Thoreau might have equally delighted in these Latin poems of the Renaissance; and it is to be hoped that Mr. Aldington will some day give us more of them.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

THE DEAN OF ENGLISH CRITICISM.

MR. EDMUND GOSSE is sometimes referred to as the dean of English criticism. The phrase is just enough. A sort of insubmissive superannuation would appear to be a steady quality among deans in general, and Mr. Gosse is no exception to the rule. He belongs to a generation of which he is almost the sole survivor in active literary work: having been a contemporary of Mark Pattison and Sir Leslie Stephen, he now finds himself a contemporary of Mr. Middleton Murry and Mr. Robert Lynd. The hiatus between the two generations is, spiritually, an enormous one, and it is a tribute to Mr. Gosse's elasticity that he bears himself as gracefully as he does among his later coevals.

Elasticity, indeed, and that not of a censurable sort, is one of Mr. Gosse's conspicuous qualities. It would be easy to draw invidious inferences from the fact of his deanship—it would be easy, but it would not be necessary. Mr. Gosse has, it is true, a critical intelligence that is neither very subtle nor very muscular, and he sometimes writes with perceptible weariness. He falls short of being a critic of the first order because his approach to literature is not a philosophic one; his points of view have not the integrity they would have had if they had been reduced to a self-consistent system. What he loses thus in authority he gains, perhaps, in resilience. On his own level he is a critic whose magnitude of accomplishment, whose range of information, and whose habitual rectitude of judgment entitle him to a hearty, if qualified, respect.

A collection of Mr. Gosse's essays, such as his recent volume, "Books on the Table," (essays reprinted from the London *Sunday Times*) reveals qualities which make it difficult to dismiss Mr. Gosse too cavalierly. Has some one said that he can not write successfully in a sprightly or witty vein? Take these opening sentences of the essay on Gorky's "Reminiscences of Tolstoy":

When Fatima unlocked the forbidden cupboard and found the withered corpses of several ladies who, as she supposed, had died in dignity and had received honourable burial, her horror was probably mingled with a certain sense of satisfac-

¹ "Medallions in Clay." Richard Aldington. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

² "Books on the Table." Edmund Gosse. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

tion. If such dreadful things had happened it was well, on the whole, that she should know all about them, especially as Bluebeard might be back at any minute. The discovery could not fail to readjust her whole domestic economy.

In somewhat the same way, the convinced and, indeed, infatuated Tolstoyan will read Gorky's little book of reminiscences, shocked, it is true, but thrilled and riveted. . . .

Has some one else said that Mr. Gosse is merely a belated Victorian and therefore possessed of inflated notions about English literature between 1830 and 1890? Mr. Gosse rejects the soft impeachment with such a sentence as this in his essay on Fronto:

I think it quite possible that a future world of critics may look upon English literature under Queen Victoria much as learned scholars look upon Latin literature under Antoninus Pius—that is to say, as something of trifling moment, archaistic and pretentious, and not worthy of serious attention.

Could any intransigent Georgian hit this particular nail on the head more accurately than Mr. Gosse does in the following words?

The real heresy about the Victorians lay not in recognizing their power and skill, but in supposing that they had exhausted Nature, and that no writers would, even in the future, do more than fumble along the path where Meredith and Arnold had climbed with springing footsteps.

Mr. Gosse is, on his own admission, "constitutionally open to persuasion." It is a not unintelligent position for a critic of letters to take, though there are critics who appear to pride themselves upon the rigidity of their minds. To be open to persuasion is not necessarily to be wanting in taste. Mr. Gosse can set his face sturdily enough against a current literary enthusiasm which he considers ill-advised. "Mr. Doughty," he says at the end of an excellent essay, "is a writer of noble imagination and great force of temper, but he is also fantastic and preposterous. Let us admire in him what is admirable, but not allow ourselves to be bullied into subjection to his eccentricities."

Undeniably Mr. Gosse can be, at his poorest, dull, inept, and stodgy. There are younger men writing in England whose criticism of letters has less tendency to the sort of ruddy primness he exemplifies, and has, on the other hand, a body and a vigour which it would be vain to look for in his essays. But at his best, as in the essays on Mr. de la Mare, on Gorky's Tolstoy, on Carlyle, he can write with sensitiveness, shrewdness, and urbanity.

NEWTON ARVIN.

THE MORALS OF MARCUS.

MARCUS AURELIUS is not an author whose value is discussed: we know that his place is beside Joubert and Thomas à Kempis, and a little lower than the Apostle Paul. His morality lacks the subversive elements which disfigure the morality of the New Testament, and he can be trusted never to disclose any awkward secrets. No parent could wish for a book that is more reliable.

All the same, if we think this way of Marcus and leave it at that, we certainly wrong him. He was a schoolmaster, but a schoolmaster who had come into the trade through circumstances as much as from intention. "Now we shall be able to breathe again, free of this schoolmaster. Not that he was hard on any of us, but I always felt that he was quietly condemning us." This is his own prediction of what one or two of those who stand by his death-bed will be saying to themselves, and they would have had reason. His gesture of elevation and weary disapproval must have been a permanent eye-sore to his courtiers, and the knowledge that he had too much Stoic gravity to say point-blank that politics made him sick can only have increased the offence. But then! But then! The Chinese poet who left the intrigues of Peking and took to the mountain-side and the wine-bowl might well reach something like unity with the Absolute, and Epicurus, revelling in his garden in the mild way in which professors do revel, also had the odds on his side. But to philosophize in a court, as Marcus frequently lets us know, is more difficult than

for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, and though the Stoics fervently proclaimed that the properly instructed Stoic is tranquil anywhere, what we feel in the divine Marcus is a constant striving after a tranquillity which he never fully attains. It is, no doubt, idle to dream of what might have happened if he could have delegated to some one else the routine work of announcing victories to the Senate and persecuting Christians. Fate and his convictions forced him into public life, and we should regard him, not with the hearty hatred with which this age regards most moralists, but with the moistened eye which is reserved for those who have sinned, but sinned from circumstance and not from intrinsic love of all the things that we ourselves dislike.

Stoic metaphysics is a subject over which it is possible for the average "modern" person to be enthusiastic. The bright pessimism of a creed which holds that temporal affairs move in exactly similar recurrent cycles, punctuated by conflagrations of the universe, and so robs events and finite personalities of all significance and makes God the sole reality—this at least can wake responsive chords; but it is hard to enjoy Stoic ethics. The Stoic refusal to admit that pleasure is good would seem obviously right to the average Oriental, and to the average Occidental it seems obviously wrong. The humorous cynicism of Socrates and Diogenes was changed by the inhabitant of a Phœnician city in Cyprus, by a dweller in Mesopotamia and by some Greeks from Asia Minor into something austere and Oriental. The civic Romans perceived the civic utility of the creed, and, with the idealism of the middle-aged, arranged to have it taught to their sons. One or two remarkable and humourless men like Marcus Aurelius took it seriously; and so it lived and prospered and blossomed right into our own period, wherein it is recognized as the more respectable and official kind of Protestant Christianity.

Marcus did not write for pleasure, and he did not intend his work to be read for pleasure. If we want something that warms the heart we must turn to Epicurus:

Avoid publicity.

My dear fellow, hoist your little sail, and flee from learning. The beginning and the root of all good is the pleasure of the belly.

It is not possible to live pleasantly without living wisely and nobly and righteously, nor to live wisely and nobly and righteously without living pleasantly.

I spit on nobility and those who vainly gape at it, when it causes no pleasure.

Epicurus says: 'The wise man will not engage in public affairs unless some disaster occurs.' Zeno says: 'He will engage in public affairs unless something prevents him.'

Lovely remarks of this kind do not occur in the writings of Marcus: what is desired and achieved is depth of moral purport. Yet some of the aphorisms certainly have a charm which the author himself might have considered spurious. "Neither a tragedian nor a harlot," says Marcus, and "all the things of the body are a river and the things of the soul a dream and a smoke." In utterances such as these he is at his best. He is at his worst, if we go by the standards of our time, when he discusses the drama, the sole object of which, like a true Stoic, he considers to be edification.

As a philosopher and literary man Marcus is, without doubt, open to the attacks of those who have a deficient sense of awe: as emperor and citizen, almost every one agrees, he must have been splendid; and it is in this light principally that Mr. Sedgwick's charming and scholarly "Life of Marcus Aurelius" takes him. Mr. Sedgwick's book is in the nature of an eulogy but Marcus is fitted as much by his rather stiff gesture as by his genuine greatness to be enshrined. During recent years there has been an increasing demand for studies of the ancients which put the man into relation with his age or movement, and the age into relation with our own times. Men like Dr. Butcher, Professor Gilbert Murray

¹ "Life of Marcus Aurelius." Henry Dwight Sedgwick. New Haven: Yale University Press.

and Mr. Lowes Dickinson have done this admirably for the Greek classical period; but the Silver Latin period, which was just as full of tendencies and velleities, and is, therefore, just as capable of interpretation in terms of the twentieth century, has not until quite lately attracted its full share of attention. What is wanted in these days, when fewer and fewer small boys will be taught Greek and Latin, is relativity of vision, and Mr. Sedgwick is nothing if not relative.

Perhaps we may say that the end of all scholarship is to estimate points of view: we may say certainly that the estimation of points of view is one of the most difficult problems with which scholarship is faced. Some readers will probably disagree mildly with Mr. Sedgwick's estimation of the Stoic point of view, and will want to maintain that there was rather more metaphor and less fact in the upward gaze than he is prepared to allow; but he has given us an interesting essay, based on good scholarship and full of select quotations.

H. O. LEE.

SHORTER NOTICES.

STRONG-WILLED people who set out to rule their own destinies by adhering to a fixed guiding principle seem to have a profound fascination for the average novelist. Few subjects appear to be more engrossing to the writer of fiction than the consequences of such principles, conscientiously followed to the point of success and then one step beyond, where the fallacy of such self-willed achievements is revealed. Not infrequently, the writer becomes so deeply absorbed in the game that he develops it beyond all plausibility. It is to the credit of Miss Delafield that she keeps a fairly firm grip on reality in her handling of this theme in "The Heel of Achilles." While it is true that the path of her heroine—if one may call her that—is smoothed a trifle too carefully, there is no violent wrenching of the story for the purposes of the moral, and the weakness which is the outgrowth of Lydia's cynical assurance and her knack at pulling her own chestnuts out of the fire, is presented with a striking effectiveness. It is logical and it is human; and Lydia's own belated attempts to win back some of the human warmth which her calculating nature had deprived her of, renders the novel doubly significant. For all its cheerless implications, the story is projected in a vein of sharp humour; its action and interaction is well-paced and convincing, and the drawing of character throughout is remarkably skilful and intelligent.

L. B.

IN "The Problem of Foreign Policy" Professor Gilbert Murray points out the manifold injustices and absurdities of the Versailles treaty; and he goes farther than some British Liberals in admitting that British, as well as French imperialism must be drastically cured before the world can hope for stable peace. The chief defect of the book is the author's tendency to think too exclusively in political terms. He does not seem to realize that the international wrongs committed by the European nations against each other, and still more against the "backward peoples" of Asia and Africa, are inextricably bound up with the present organization of commerce and finance. Recognizing the moral and political maladjustments which stand in the way of a genuine settlement, he does not seem to comprehend the sinister economic forces in the background, which are so largely responsible for these political and moral maladjustments. Professor Murray devotes a chapter of violent and superficial criticism to the Bolsheviks. He might well have devoted more careful attention to the extraordinary and novel developments of their foreign policy. The treaty recently concluded between Russia and Persia, to take one among many examples, is a striking illustration of the kind of diplomacy which alone can make for trust and good will among nations. All the iniquitous concessions extorted by the Tsarist regime are voluntarily cancelled; Persia is restored to full economic and political freedom. The Soviet Government can do this sort of thing because it is not controlled by petroleum-magnates and concession-hunters. The liberal political philosophy of which Professor Murray is an admirable exponent broke down appallingly in the face of the war. Before it can rehabilitate itself it must erect some effective bulwark against the inroads of international finance upon international comity.

W. H. C.

¹ "The Heel of Achilles." E. M. Delafield. New York: The Macmillan Company.

² "The Problem of Foreign Policy." Gilbert Murray. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

AN occasional touch of irony in the narrative of "Grim: the Story of a Pike" lifts the book out of the ruck of similar works. The life of a fish might scarcely be expected to yield a full-length book of pure adventure, yet, in his handling of the theme, Mr. Svend Fleuron holds the interest of his reader from beginning to end. One follows the pike's successive encounters with his adversaries in the endless struggle "to devour others and to avoid being devoured oneself" with the attention and curiosity which one usually reserves for more chivalrous struggles. How the pike grows and grows and challenges bigger opponents year after year until he is finally vanquished by a little boy with an improvised tackle, makes a narrative of epic proportions, thoroughly readable both for its story and for the crystal-clear style in which it is told—for this we are obliged in large measure to the translators.

L. B.

MR. MOWAT, in his contribution to the "Kings and Queens of England" series,² goes so far as to suggest that Henry V "in his great attempt to conquer France was possibly actuated by ambition." Later he throws out the idea that this adventurous son of a usurping adventurer was prudent enough to distract his subjects from sedition, rebellion and anarchy by involving them in war. No historical imagination is necessary for the understanding of this oft-repeated ruse. On the other hand, the notorious condition of society in the time of the Lancastrians prevents us from accepting the statement that "at home all went well" after Agincourt. How about the Lollards? one is tempted to ask. In defence of his thesis that Henry V "permanently raised a whole people on to another plane of life," Mr. Mowat devotes twenty-five pages to an inquiry into the historical accuracy of Shakespeare's picture of Henry's dissolute youth; but Henry V as the symbol of England's "national aspirations," the sincere servant of the people, labouring under the "prerogative of royal birth, to be afraid of no responsibility and to be unmoved by overwhelming burdens of care," is not as convincing as that other figure, the jolly comrade of the *condottieri*.

N. A.

IN writing of the spirit of French music during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the critic is handicapped by his inevitable discovery of the fact that French music of that epoch is somewhat wanting in what may be termed body. Yet if M. Lassere's subject is as alarmingly disincarnate as he makes it appear, it is difficult to understand how anyone can write about it at all: one would imagine that the only approach to an understanding of the art lay in supplication, fasting and prayers. It is true that the author of "The Spirit of French Music" labours under the exiguous nature of his task; for the era he has chosen to examine was but sparsely settled with musical genius, and such genius as it boasted was more aristocratic than noble and inspired. There are several names, however, with which the critic of the music of France may conjure in perfect safety. Among them are André Danican, better known as Philidor, Etienne Méhul, Jean Baptiste Lully, Pierre Monsigny, and the innumerable Couperins who, for two hundred years, were as active in their own way as the Bachs across the Rhine. In addition, there were the prolific troubadours who, though unknown by name, were the font and inspiration of the whole country-side. A discussion of such factors in the development of early Gallic song is therefore expected from any man who writes in the spirit of the art. To none of these sources, however, does M. Lassere devote one chapter: to most of them he does not devote so much as a single paragraph. Grétry and Rameau are appropriately conceded some space; Monsigny is mentioned by name. But thereafter the author is stingy, for the remainder of his book is given over to a discussion of the Italian School and to essays on Meyerbeer and Wagner, in which, by maligning two Germanic composers, he seems to believe he is heaping glory on his compatriots. M. Lassere intimates that in a subsequent volume he will discuss French musicians from the time of Louis XIV down to our twentieth century. If his second volume is in any way a sequel to his first, we may shortly expect a dissertation on the spirit of modern French music, opening with an essay on Boieldieu and proceeding straightway to discussions of Scriabin, Strauss, Mahler and Leo Ornstein.

W. E. P.

¹ "Grim: the Story of a Pike." Svend Fleuron. Translated by Jessie Muir and W. Emme. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

² "Henry V." R. B. Mowat. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

³ "The Spirit of French Music." Pierre Lassere. Translated by Denis Turner. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.

A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

MUCH has been said lately about the possibilities of pamphleteering in this country. It is quite natural that people should speak of pamphlets at a time like the present, when so many parties and organizations devoted to change and reform have broken down, and our social life is engulfed in apathy and cynicism; the historic rôle of the pamphleteer has been to blow on the embers of the popular faith, with a success of which we are aware if we remember the various careers, for instance, of Voltaire and Lamennais, of Cardinal Newman and Thomas Paine. There are periods of indifference and of a sort of brutalization when the social man falls into a stupor; then it is only the gadflies that are able to sting him back into consciousness. What a difference it might make in the sultry contemporary air if we had a brisk pamphlet-literature! That is a notion many people appear to share; but, on the one hand, the publishers say that they can not distribute pamphlets and, on the other, the pamphleteers we have (always excepting Mr. Upton Sinclair) complain that the public will not buy their wares. The prospects of American pamphleteering would thus be sorry indeed were it not for certain facts that seem to have been overlooked.

For the failure of pamphlet-literature in this country the publishers, it seems to me, are not greatly to blame. I say this in spite of the repulsive appearance of most American pamphlets. To judge how mean, how unreadable from this point of view they generally are, one has only to compare a lapful of them with such typical English publications as those of the Fabian Society. Most of them look like testimonials of Cough Medicines; their covers are designed without taste, their type-pages are so small and so crowded that the eye recoils from them, the abuse of italics and bold-faced capitals sets one's head aching, the titles attempt to out-scream the din of the subway. "GOUGED: or the National Crisis"—this is the sort of label that meets the expectant glance; it is like the noisy slamming of a door in one's face, and for all such errors of judgment the publishers are largely responsible. How can the written word win a hearing when it is clothed in this fashion, especially at a time when the cheapest magazines are cunningly designed to attract the eye? It is not these physical questions of which one chiefly thinks, however, as one concludes that the possibilities of the pamphlet have not been explored in this country. The real trouble lies with the form, the style, the quality of the contents. Our pamphleteers have not begun to learn their trade.

ONE can divide them roughly into two classes: the patient gatherers of facts and the stump-orators who have resorted to the printed page. Strictly speaking, neither of these types of mind fulfils the requirements of the pamphleteer. To write a good pamphlet it is not enough to be emotionally possessed; it is not enough to be a master of statistics. Facts in mass belong in books; only the few can ever wish to obtain them. Oratory belongs to the ear, not to the eye. The office of pamphlets is to pique the mind, to arouse the imagination, to stimulate the intellectual and moral appetite; and that is just what most of ours fail to do. There must be thousands of people in this country who remember Mr. Wells's little tract, "This Misery of Boots"; the radical movement in the English-speaking world has had no more effective literary aid. It is indeed an example of the pamphlet at its best; and it shows, in this connexion, how greatly the literary faculty outweighs every other. Mr. Wells fixes the reader's attention on the problem of footgear, a problem, it is true, that has never been as acute in America as in England; before he has reached the fourth page he has made the reader groan with all the accumulated memories of the aches and pains he has suffered from inadequate, shoddy shoes; then into the problem of shoes he reads the problem of the existing social system; till the full force of one's indignation, drawn gradually away

from the lesser problem, directs itself toward the greater, and one rises at last a radical for life. What torrents of exhortation could ever accomplish this result? What cataracts of statistics? One fact skilfully handled has aroused one's desire for all the other facts.

THE conclusion one draws from this comparison is that our pamphleteers are not primarily concerned with awakening either desire or thought. They expose abuses, they stir the emotions; they never enter the sphere of discussion at all. There exist to-day immense numbers of people in this country who have been fed with the unhappy facts of our social life, whose emotions have been so worked upon that they have lost all sense of allegiance to the civilization we know. Very well; but they have no notion what to do about it, they have no plans of action, no ideas that are strictly germane to the conditions, they have nothing in fact but a confused feeling that whatever is up ought to be down and whatever is down ought to be up. If this is the case, it is largely because the ideas that have been generated in this country have not been rendered accessible; they are locked up in the tomes of thinkers whose fashion of writing is more formidable than the hieroglyphics of the Rosetta Stone. If these ideas were seized upon and placed in relation, one by one, ingeniously, tactfully, with the very facts our journalistic investigators have made so familiar to us, we might begin to form our programmes and overcome the inertia that besets us all. That is one task for our pamphleteers; to popularize, with as much wit as they can command, the findings of the dismal scientists. "The young radical to-day," said Randolph Bourne, "is not asked to be a martyr, but he is asked to be a thinker, an intellectual leader. The labour-movement in this country needs a philosophy, a literature. Labour will scarcely do this thinking for itself. Unless middle-class radicalism threshes out its categories and interpretations and undertakes this constructive thought it will not be done." Exactly; but enough ideas already exist to carry us more than half-way to Utopia: what is wanting is the relation of the ideas to the facts and the emotions. That is what the "middle-class radicals" ought to undertake; and surely the pamphlet is the appropriate vehicle for this work.

MORE important than everything else at present, however, is a general harrowing of the American soil. Satire, controversy, the smoking out of prejudice, the challenging of assumption, the cross-firing of a lively intellectual warfare can alone rouse us out of the lethargy which at present seems to block every sort of social movement. Two or three dozen writers most readily called to mind, whose work is scattered through the reviews, might, if they set their pens to work, each on a subject that called forth all his powers, produce the nucleus of a pamphlet-literature that would soon have its effect upon our lifeless atmosphere. Effective as they so often are in their shorter articles, how much more effective they would be if, aside from their more ambitious undertakings, they plunged into some subject either dear or hateful to their hearts and explored it, with all the wit, the penetration, the good temper at their command! A raking fire turned upon our popular illusions, our literature, our stage, our political and economic life! With such a start the pamphlet might soon come into its own again. The question of distribution will never solve itself as long as the pamphleteers have to seek the public. It can only be solved when a portion of the public seeks the pamphleteers. And certainly to a portion of the public the pamphleteers, if they study their art, have it in their power to make themselves indispensable.

THE Reviewer recommends the following recent books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"Representative Plays by American Dramatists," edited by Montrose J. Moses. Vol. III (1856-1917). New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.

"Eric Dorn," by Ben Hecht. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

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